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HICKIE BACK IN OZ



MIKE HICKMAN is back in Australia after an absence of six years.

The Wolves reserve team coach Mike Hickman left the English Division 1 club after last week's game against Bolton.

Hickman, who arrived at Molineux with former manager Mark McGhee and current boss Colin Lee in December 1995, has returned to Sydney, where his son Steve still plays.

"I have given this a lot of thought, but I was desperate to return home and be with my family," said Hickman who left in 1992 after falling out with the then Sydney United management over budget.

Hickman had brought in several star players to United but the board refused to pay the transfers and Hickman walked out, picking up a professional coaching career in England where he was highly regarded.

Former Bristol City manager John Ward has joined Wolverhampton as Lee's second in command.

Ward, who lost his job with City last month, has moved to Molineux on a non-contract basis.

He has vast experience having previously worked as assistant manager at Aston Villa to Graham Taylor and current Celtic boss Jozef Venglos.

Ward then had spells in charge of York and Bristol Rovers.

With Hickman's return to Australia speculation will immediately link him to the troubled Canberra Cosmos.

Chairman Ian Knop has said that the club will not rush into an appointment following the axing of Rale Rasic with stand-in Tony Brennan and Norman Kelly doing a satisfactory job.

SPIRIT MOVE FOR PORIC



Branko Culina: the Sydney Olympic coach is ready to off-load Adem Poric at the right price

BY
BRUCE CAMPBELL

SYDNEY OLYMPIC reject Adem Poric may become a Northern Spirit player this week — subject to negotiations between the two harbour city clubs.

Last week Poric trained with the Ericsson Cup new guys but a breakdown in negotiations saw that come to a halt.

"We had permission from Sydney Olympic

for Adem to train with us and he spent two days at Spirit," says player coach Graham Arnold. "He is a quality player and I am hopeful that he will be able to sign with us."

"Poric would bring something to the side that we don't have at present, that is why I am trying to sign him."

"But Sydney Olympic want too high a loan fee for him and at this moment the deal is off."

Arnold was, however,

still hopeful that the two clubs would agree a compromise.

Negotiations were on hold until Spirit played its Round 10 match against Canberra Cosmos on Monday night (as *Inside Soccer* went to press).

Poric was axed from the Olympic squad after a disciplinary blow up and at one stage it looked as if Brisbane Strikers would pick his contract up.

But the player has

always expressed an interest in playing under Arnold who is also keen to have the wayward star in his pack.

"I laid down the rules to Adem before we even started," said Arnold. "But I am hoping that we can sign him because he can run from box to box as well as score goals. We just don't have anyone like that."

Arnold also confirmed that he is still looking to sign a striker

although stressed that his club wouldn't burst its budget to do that.

"I might have to off load a couple of the players who haven't played as well as expected to make way for a striker," said the man who made a big name for himself overseas as a gun scorer.

"If the Poric deal doesn't go through by mid-week then it will be off for good and we'll look elsewhere." Northern Spirit has

been a huge success at the box office so far in its debut NSL season.

Record crowds have regularly flocked to North Sydney Oval to watch the side's home games but they are still short of the consistency in results which would see them into the Top 6.

Now Graham Arnold is moving to add the missing ingredients to his on-field mixture. Poric might well be one of the missing links.

**THE WEEKLY BIBLE OF AUSTRALIAN SOCCER
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Irish to play for Omagh victims

The Irish Republic will host Northern Ireland in an exhibition soccer game next year, with the proceeds going to the victims of last August's Omagh bombing.

The game will be at Lansdowne Road, Dublin, May 29 and likely will attract a capacity 50,000 crowd.

A car bomb planted by Irish Republican Army dissidents in the Northern Ireland town of Omagh killed 29 people and injured 370 on August 15 in the worst atrocity in the province's 30-year conflict.

Details of the game

were announced last week along with several other matches being organised by Ireland as it prepares for European Championship qualifying games against Macedonia, Yugoslavia, Croatia and Malta.

Mick McCarthy's team also will host Paraguay on February 10 and Sweden on April 28.

After the game against Northern Ireland in May, the Irish will visit Poland on August 18 and Denmark in Copenhagen on October 9.

Aloisi happy at embattled Pompey

By Graeme Paterson

The chairman of Portsmouth Football Club is planning to sell players at knock-down prices to save the team from financial ruin, it has been reported.

Martin Gregory is said to have drawn up a "bargain price list" of his squad to be circulated to every club in the country.

Gregory has spent 48 hours discussing a takeover deal with businessmen Vince Wolanin and Brian Howe, but the American-based pair flew home with the future of the club still uncertain.

Manager Alan Ball is said to be standing firm by the players, who yesterday staged a rebellion against Gregory when they learned he was planning to sell them off.

Following a meeting with the club's

director, Peter Hinkinson, at Fratton Park yesterday, Ball said: "The chairman has got to tell the people exactly what is going on."

"I've insisted that he makes a statement. It's all very well hearing rumours about this and that, but he's got to tell people why I have been told to sell players."

"He has got to tell people the extent of the problems."

"One thing is for sure - I'm having no part in selling off this team to pay off debts."

"He says we have to sell players and I disagree with that and have told him that."

"I don't know where he will get the money from unless he gets a mass injection of cash from somewhere."

"I've got a four-year contract and I'm planning to see it out."

"I am not going anywhere."

Portsmouth skipper

Adrian Whitbread has met with senior players who decided to release a statement to The News, the city's newspaper.

He said: "We all got together and decided that we didn't want to go and we wanted to remain here and be loyal to the supporters who have been loyal to us all season."

"The manager doesn't want to sell anybody and we don't want to go."

And Portsmouth's biggest Australian asset, striker John Aloisi, looks set for imminent transfer to solve the club's crippling debt burden.

Premier League Charlton are the favourite to snare the 22-year-old Aloisi.

But Ball and Aloisi both denied any knowledge of the plans, despite reports last week that the financially troubled club was preparing to sell the classy

forward to Charlton for \$A2.70 million.

"I've made my feelings very clear," Ball told The Mirror newspaper.

"I don't want to sell Aloisi or any of the others."

Portsmouth is losing around \$A19,000 a day and its last published accounts revealed losses of \$A9.5 million.

Last month it had to borrow \$A405,500 to pay players.

Hampshire police, who last week cleared former Australia manager Terry Venables of any wrong doing over transfers, are still investigating other business matters at the club.

Venables moved from Portsmouth to first division rivals Crystal Palace earlier this year and talks are now underway at Fratton Park to sell the club to an American consortium.

Ball told the Daily Mail that he wanted Aloisi to stay at Pompey.

"He has still got a lot to learn before he becomes the finished article, like how to play with his back to a goal, and he is a keen student," Ball said.

"If a transfer was imminent I am sure that (Charlton manager) Alan Curbishley would at least have had a chat with me but I have not spoken to him."

Aloisi, whose 17 goals make him the second highest scorer of England's top two divisions this season, told the paper he did not have itchy feet.

"It has only been talk, I have heard nothing and cannot let it affect my game."

"If Portsmouth need to sell me then it is up to them but I am very happy here at the moment."

INSIDE SOCCER Australia's weekly soccer Bible

Stop press

Asian nations could decide this week to boycott the 2002 World Cup in Japan and South Korea in protest at FIFA's decision to give them only two qualifying places, the head of the Olympic Council of Asia said in Bangkok on Sunday.

Sheikh Ahmad al-Saber said such a move would mean there would be no World Cup in Asia. He said a decision could come as early as today (Tuesday) when the board of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) is due to hold an emergency meeting on the sidelines of the Asian Games in Bangkok.

"The OCA will support the AFC 100 percent whatever they decide, even if they boycott the World Cup," Sheikh Ahmad said. It would mean no World Cup in Asia. I hope this is a clear message - it is a serious message."



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Velappan warms to World Cup Aussies

By Philippe Naughton

Australian soccer stars, frustrated with endless winning forays into the South Pacific, could finally get to face some real international competition in qualifying matches for the next World Cup.

Asian soccer boss Peter Velappan said in Bangkok on Sunday that bringing Australia and other Oceania nations into Asian qualifying groups for the 2002 tournament could be one way to resolve a bitter row with FIFA over World Cup places.

"We could say let's integrate the OFC (Oceania Football Confederation) into Asia," Velappan said.

"Geographically, it would make more sense that have them play in South America."

FIFA decided last week to give Asia four places in the 2002 World Cup.

But since Japan and South Korea qualify automatically as co-hosts, that means only two Asian qualifiers will make it into the tournament.

For the 1998 World Cup in France, three

Asian nations qualified directly and a fourth, Iran, went through after edging out Oceania winner Australia in a play-off.

FIFA decided that for the 2002 finals, the Oceania winner must play the fifth placed South American side.

Asian soccer bosses are due to hold an emergency meeting at the Asian Games in Bangkok next week to discuss the FIFA move.

Velappan, general secretary of the Asian Football Confederation, said Asia was willing to sacrifice one spot because it had the two co-hosts, but did not want the Oceania play-off moved to South America - which already had four of the 32 spots.

He was also critical of the way FIFA's new president, Swiss Sepp Blatter, had handled the decision, saying the four Asian members of the FIFA board were given no prior warning of Blatter's plans to change the tournament line-up at the meeting in Zurich.

"It was so sudden," he said.

"All the allocations were given out at the start of the meeting and there

was no prior knowledge of it."

"They (the Asian representatives) were taken aback."

"It's difficult to say, but we feel that FIFA, especially now under new leadership, should be more democratic."

The proposal to bring Oceania into the Asian fold will be music to the ears of Soccer Australia, which tried unsuccessfully at the FIFA Congress two years ago to head off Oceania's ratification as a full confederation.

The Australians argued then that the sport would never develop in Australia unless the Socceroos faced stronger competition.

Fellow Oceania members such as Tonga and Fiji, in return, simply accused the Australians of being selfish.

FIFA's latest decision to make the Oceania group winners play off in distant soccer-mad South America was described by one former Australian player as another "slap in the face".

Australia have a dismal World Cup record.

They have qualified for the finals only once, in

1974, and have lost out regularly at the last hurdle since then.

But the last campaign was the most heart-breaking.

Fielding their best ever team and coached by former England manager Terry Venables, the Socceroos waltzed through qualifying with scores as high as 13-0 over the Solomon Islands.

Faced by Iran, arguably Asia's strongest soccer power, they grabbed a valuable 1-1 draw in Tehran with a goal from teenager Harry Kewell, who plays for Leeds United in the English Premier Division.

Then they took a 2-0 lead in the home leg in Melbourne - only for Iran to grab two late goals and

win on the away goals rule.

Velappan said it was not yet clear what degree of integration there might be with Oceania, but there was no logic in giving the extra play-off to South America when more than 40 Asian nations were fighting for just two places.

"In the past the Australians have always been wanting to play with Asia, to play teams like China and Japan," he said.

"We'd have to think of a (qualifying) format," he added.

"I don't think it's logistically and economically possible to integrate both these confederations."

"But we could find a format."

Aussies get shirt deal

Sports goods manufacturer adidas has signed a lucrative new four year contract with Soccer Australia.

The deal ties up all the men's national teams and will include the 2002 World Cup in Japan. However the Olympic team will not wear the adidas strip during the 2000 Sydney Games.

The company, which backs Socceroo Harry Kewell, has sponsored Soccer Australia since 1994.

Dempsey admits loss

The Oceania Football Confederation (OFC) will continue pressing for automatic entry to the World Cup soccer finals after another snub by FIFA for the 2002 tournament.

World soccer's governing body FIFA has ruled that the Oceania qualifying group winner will have to play a home-and-away series against the fifth-placed team from the South American qualifiers.

Oceania is the only one of FIFA's six confederations not to have automatic entry to the world's most prestigious soccer tournament.

The FIFA edict means the Oceania winner, which is traditionally Australia, could have to play the likes of Chile, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Uruguay, or even Argentina to make the 32-team finals in Japan and Korea in 2002.

FIFA president Sepp Blatter will likely be quizzed about the decision during his visit to Auckland to open the new Oceania confederation soccer academy at Mount Smart Stadium.

Oceania confederation chairman Charlie Dempsey, from Auckland, said the OFC had lost the battle for the 2002 finals to be hosted jointly by Japan and Korea, but another attempt would be made for the 2006 tournament.

"It went very badly for us," Dempsey said.

"We didn't have a show.

"We debated it for over an hour, but none of the other confederations were prepared to give up their place.

"We got a hearing, but everyone is very jealous of their own position."

Dempsey said the Oceania cause was not helped



by the fact that the region has not had a team in the World Cup finals since 1982, when New Zealand's All Whites played in Spain.

All Whites coach Ken Dugdale said the decision was disappointing, but he took a pragmatic view to the news.

However, he was concerned that Oceania was being constantly swapped between the Asian and South American groups.

"From our point of view it would be a bit

easier if we could be kept in the same position, instead of changing from one to another," he said.

"If we just played the South American teams all the time, you would get a feel for the style of football and then an insight into the players you are going to come up against.

"Then you could prepare a program that gave you some sort of chance of qualifying."

Asian outrage at FIFA decision



Asian football supremo Peter Velappan

has launched a scathing attack on FIFA's decision to give the continent only two places for World Cup 2002.

With South-Korea and Japan co-hosting the Cup, Asia was hoping for three other places but last week FIFA rejected the idea an announced that only two spots were available.

Velappan, Asian Football Confederation general secretary and FIFA coordinator for 2002 branded the decision a disgrace.

"FIFA's decision is disrespectful to Asia and a disgrace," said Velappan.

"Asia is the loser here and it

shows that FIFA has no respect for Asia at all."

Asia had four representatives in France during the northern summer after Iran defeated Australia to make the most of the confederation's allocation of three-and-a-half places.

Velappan said the decision constituted a reduction in the number of places Asia has at the World Cup and that the AFC's executive committee would hold an emergency meeting on December 15 to discuss the matter.

"The president (Sultan Ahmad Shah) and the executive committee are very angry and disappointed with this decision and we will be discussing what to do next," said the

general secretary.

Asian and African

sides withdrew from the World Cup finals in 1966 in protest at FIFA's allocation of places but such extreme action is unlikely this time.

FIFA president Sepp Blatter had been due to visit the Thai capital last weekend after touring South Korea and Japan to see first hand the 2002 preparations but it was suddenly called off when Blatter complained of feeling unwell.

The latest row between FIFA and Asia is another in a series of clashes since the vote was taken in Zurich last year to have co-hosting for the first time in World Cup history.

Rupert tops, soccer also rans

Australian-born media mogul Rupert Murdoch has been voted the world's most powerful person in sport.

Murdoch tops US weekly magazine The Sporting News' annual list of the 100 Most Powerful People In Sports.

Murdoch is the chief executive of News Corporation, the global holding company for his interests including BSKyB and Fox television outlets.

But he is one of the few international figures on the list, which omits FIFA president Joseph Blatter, IAAF president Primo Nebiolo and Formula One president Bernie Ecclestone in favour of Sandra Ortiz-Del Valle, a teacher-coach at Humanities High School in New York City (98th),

Media Baron named most powerful man in sport in dubious American poll

American sportscaster Bob Costas (83rd) and US sports statistical analyst Jeff Sagarin (82nd).

The highest ranking non-American, other than Murdoch, is Dominican baseball player Sammy Sosa, who plays for the Chicago Cubs (24th).

International Olympic Committee president Juan Antonio Samaranch of Spain is listed 29th and IOC vice president Richard Pound of Canada is 36th.

Only one soccer figure is listed, Philip Anschutz, owner of the Los Angeles Galaxy, Colorado Rapids and Chicago Fire of US Major League Soccer and the Los Angeles Kings of the North American National Hockey League.

He was listed 18th.

Among the other foreigners is South Korean golfer Pak Se-Ri (90th). Pak finished second in her first season on the US LPGA tour's money list behind Sweden's Annika

Sorenstam.

Sorenstam, who won more than \$US1 million (\$A1.63 million) in purses this year, is not listed.

Also on the list at No. 100 was Glory, a "Beanie Baby" stuffed animal toy which was used as a promotional at many US Major League Baseball games this past season.

The toy was cited for significant increases in attendance at games where the item was given away.

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Bruce Campbell

IT'S ONLY AN OPINION

HOW CAN soccer go forward? How can our great game achieve its true potential?

You can say that importing top class players, stopping the drain of our youth, getting the game on commercial television, increasing media exposure and lots of nice things will do the trick but the answer lies in one little word – professionalism.

In short, the sport must embrace a fully professional set-up.

The first thing that we have to realise is

that at the present time we do not have one fully professional club.

A fully professional club is one in which the players only play, they don't have to do clinics or office jobs for the club – and they certainly don't have to do part time or full time jobs to supplement their income.

The development work should be handled by a development manager, someone who is qualified to act in that area.

Again, the coach should concentrate purely on looking after his players.

And each club should have a full office staff.

It wasn't that long ago that journalists had to phone certain clubs at night time because officials weren't available during the day.

Times have changed dramatically and it is getting better all the time.

Every season brings our game closer to the starting point of professionalism.

But it isn't here yet.

When it is then soccer, or football – call it what you like, will really boom.

It isn't an overnight

thing to put in a full time office staff either.

It takes a period of time to build up a club's revenue to the stage where full time wages can be met 52 weeks of the year.

Soccer in Australia has made enormous advances in the last decade off the field as well as on it but at times the on-field progress has been hindered by the slower rate of off-field progress.

To run a club successfully in the current NSL requires a budget of \$1.5 million.

That is a lot of cash.

There are those clubs who do not have that kind of money and, in truth, they are the ones who are suffering.

They are the ones who can't afford to bring in new players or bring in bigger profile players.

Forget about serious youth development programmes in those cases because many of

our clubs are struggling to make ends meet on a week to week basis, never mind planning for the long term future.

My figure for running a really successful NSL side in today's market is \$2.5 – 3 million.

That would allow a full office complement plus a full playing roster on soccer only duties.

But it won't happen. And it won't happen because we are in Catch 22 situation.

Clubs can't generate enough income because there aren't enough games and they can't have more games because there isn't enough money.

The season is too short to generate that kind of money also.

After all, why bother employing 25 players to work only 30 weeks of the year plus possible play-offs and pre-season training.

Even one game per

week isn't enough to generate sufficient income.

Clubs must be able to play 40 games minimum to achieve anything like a required income base.

And even that should be topped up by play-offs, club challenges with overseas sides and genuine high profile pre-season tournaments.

Compare our own season with that of the English Premier League where top sides will play anything up to 60 games per season.

That is why they are professional and it is interesting to note that the only ones who bleat about too much football are the players and coaches.

I have yet to read of an English Premier league fan, or bank manager for that matter, who said there was too much football.

It's an interesting thought.

Letting Us Know

HOW MANY times do you pick up your favourite soccer pooper and think, 'why don't they do this, why don't they do that,?'?

The truth is that probably no-one has thought of it.

Recently Kevin Christopher, an old sparring partner of mine from *Studs Up*, made a good point.

He asked why soccer newspapers didn't differentiate from match report to match report, why they didn't give extra treatment to a Match of the Round.

Nice point. But why didn't we think of it?

The truth is that we just didn't, but will happily take it on board this issue – see our extra coverage of the Perth Glory v Marconi match.

So how do you come in? Easy. Just e-mail, write or phone your comments and I'll put them to management.

And for those who say I am anti-David Hill why don't YOU prove me wrong.

I'll donate SIX SOCCER BALLS to the junior club of your choice for the best article on how good David Hill was for the game.

Closing date is December 31, let's see if there are any takers.

Farewell to the Waves

IT WAS with some regret that I bade farewell to the radio waves last week when I discontinued my involvement with VOX FM's *Sunday Soccer*. Thanks very much to the many callers during the week who expressed their support.

However, a long-standing failure to address certain key issues by the station left me with little alternative. It is important to keep the quality of any production as high as you can within sensible restrictions.

I enjoyed my short time on VOX FM immensely and am sure that something else is just around the corner.

CLUB PATROL

Sydney United still have a long injury list. Missing from the away trip to Brisbane were Steve Eagleton, Nathan Day, David Barrett and Abbas Saad.

Christian Care looks like getting an extended run in the Marconi first team squad while the Stallions are also hit with a pile of injuries. The stylish youngster sipped for big things – this might yet be his season.

Canberra Cosmos new recruit Paul Roberts is getting closer to a first team place. He played for the ACT Academy against Wollongong and then against Adelaide City he was on the bench. Roberts played for Illawarra side Port Kembla last winter under former Soccerroo star Adrian Alston.

Two-goal star Gary Owens was left out of the Breakers side for last weekend. But there was no mystery, the youngster who made such an impact on his debut is suffering a calf strain.

Wollongong captain Matt Horsley has extended his contract at the Wolves for another two years – and will cap it all off on this week when he makes his 200th appearance for the club.

Falcons coach Stuart Munro was in a fighting mood before his side's away trip to Wollongong. "It's time for my players to stand up and be counted," he said, "and not to feel sorry for themselves."

Northern Spirit were without Robbie Slater and Robbie Enes for the Monday night game against Canberra Cosmos – both players were out suspended. While Ian Crook, Tony Perinich and Troy Cranney are on the long-term injury list with the last two looking likely to be out for most of the season.

Aunty in the Sun

Thank goodness for good old aunty coverage of the soccer – without their excellent presentation most people would have no idea, via the TV, of what is going on.

However, I have one BIG complaint: Why in Australia do the TV companies always set up their cameras facing into the sun.

Marconi v Olympic was a perfect example – the pictures were terrible and really painful to watch.

The Cosmos v Wollongong game was the same.

I wonder how many people are turned off by the quality of the picture?

Compare with the coverage of UK and European games where the TV pictures are brilliant (from what I have seen anyway).

I realise the TV companies probably have dictated to them by the clubs/stadiums where they have to set up their cameras – but having them pointing into the sun is stupid to say the least.

Anyways, full marks to ABC for the coverage they give, but does anyone have an e-mail address so I can forward this to them.

Your WRITE

YOU CAN air your view on any subject relating to soccer by replying to *Inside Soccer* at Fax: (02) 4285 7481 Email: insidesoccer@hotmail.com You must include a day time telephone number for verification purposes, if necessary, and letters should be kept under 400 words. All correspondence must include your name and address – although we will print letters under nom-de-plumes. Letters on any football related subject are welcome but should reach us by Friday morning prior to print to reach the next deadline.

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ward this to them.

Keith Saisell

iSport & TV

Hi, I have subscribed to your paper and I think you are doing a great job.

You have mentioned the iSport web page in the last two issues but you haven't given out the web address, can you put it in the next issue. (Ed – done)

Also, I am disappointed with the current TV coverage of 'football'.

We get nowhere near the quality of TV coverage that we have had over the last few seasons.

Keep the pressure on

Channel 7, ABC and Soccer Australia because this service is very poor.

Mark O'Leary, ACT

Bagging TV

A lot of people are bagging the current TV coverage of soccer but they are maybe forgetting one very important factor.

Maybe the SBS programmes were good,

they might have even been brilliant – but I never saw one.

Like many Australians I didn't receive the SBS signal and after over 20 years of broadcasting that just wasn't good enough.

Let's encourage the ABC guys.

I know their coverage is far from perfect but it is at least national.

J McEwan, Country NSW

Perth Glory

I picked up a copy of *Inside Soccer* in a Perth city centre newsagency last week and was very

impressed.

The coverage is both topical and well written.

Australian soccer has for a long time needed a good, authoritative coverage of the game.

I just hope that you will extend your coverage to our local State League also.

There is a lot of soccer played in Perth.

Naturally like every body else in Perth I am a big Glory fan and look forward to reading your coverage.

J Ambrose Armadale, WA

(Ed. – look out for Richard Kreider's spotlight view on the Glory's game last weekend. And we welcome Richard to *Inside Soccer* as our new WA correspondent.)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

SUSAN

PLEASE POST YOUR GREETINGS MESSAGES BY FRIDAY 12 NOON

I'm no shirker; Bosnich

Socceroo goalkeeper Mark Bosnich has begged fans not to call him "Sicknote" as he spoke of a whispering campaign against him.

Bosnich has been out for two months with an injury to his right shoulder and is due to see another specialist next week.

But his enforced lay-off has coincided with contract negotiations with Villa and reports of a multi-million pound signing with Manchester United and Bosnich worries that the rumours have soured his relationship with fans.

Villa boss John Gregory called him "greedy" for re-

fusing to sign a contract while he waits to choose between a host of lucrative offers.

Manchester United and Roma are two of the top teams likely to start talking to him when his Villa contract expires on January 1.

Bosnich had let in only four goals in 10 games and Villa was top of the Premiership when he was injured in October.

He told *Inside Soccer* all he wanted to do was sort out the injury and get fit to play again.

"It's doing my head in because I know exactly what



people are thinking about the injury," Bosnich said.

"They ask how you are and how long it will be before you are playing again but you can see them looking out of the side of their eyes."

He recalled when teammate Dalian Atkinson was branded a "sicknote" when he had problems at the club.

"I wondered whether he was really committed to playing. But maybe I was wrong

about that and if so I know now exactly how he must have been feeling."

Bosnich said he was desperate to find out what was wrong with his shoulder and get it put right.

Meanwhile he was maintaining his fitness ready for a return.

"My world revolves around football and if I'm not playing nothing else can be right," he said.

Battling Drug Cheats

By Philippe Naughton

Olympic chief Juan Antonio Samaranch has said he hoped to get soccer, cycling and tennis on his side soon to back new plans for common rules on punishing drug cheats.

The three sports all expressed reservations when all the Olympic sports federations met in Lausanne last month to work on plans for a unified doping code which includes a new testing agency and common two-year bans for serious offenders.

But International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Samaranch said he had talked to International Tennis Federation (ITF) chief Brian Tobin about the matter and he also did not believe cycling would prove to be a problem.

The Spaniard added the executive board of soccer's world governing body FIFA was now also ready to join the anti-doping fight. Samaranch will meet FIFA president Sepp Blatter in Zurich on January 6 to talk about the problem.

"After that meeting I think it will be very clear that both the international federation and the IOC are in the same position as regards the fight against doping," Samaranch told a news conference at the Asian Games in Bangkok.

The IOC hopes to get all Olympic sports to adopt the new code when they meet for a special world conference on doping in the Swiss town of Lausanne at the start of February.

FIFA is worried that sanctions set in stone could lead to legal difficulties because some substances are regarded as being performance-enhancing in some sports but not in others.

At last month's meeting the cycling and tennis federations were against a move demanding sports bodies agree to the principles before they are allowed to compete in the Olympics.

The IOC has been trying for several years to get all sports to agree to common sanctions on competitors who try to cheat their way to glory but it has had limited success.

There has been talk of throwing sports who fail to agree to the code out of the Olympics.

But it is unlikely that the IOC will take such a drastic step.

Samaranch said: "But I would like to repeat that we are not threatening any kind of international federation."

KAREMBEU GRABS WONDERBRA

France's World Cup winning midfielder Christian Karembeu is to marry Slovakian super model Adriana Sklenarikova, it has been announced.

Karembeu's wife-to-be, who fronts Wonderbra's advertising campaign, is an avid supporter of the French national team and took part in a fashion parade at the Stade de France before the World Cup final in July. Karembeu, a winner of the Oceania Player of the Year Award, started his European career with Nantes before joining Sampdoria and then Real Madrid at the start of the year.

The midfielder has won 38 caps for France.

The wedding is scheduled to take place on December 22.

Blades

Blades

Blades

Blades



Diamond membership on offer at Bruce Stadium

SOCCER Fans in Canberra are being offered a novel chance to purchase an extended ticket – for all football codes.

Under the scheme Cosmos fans would pay between \$1400 for three years and \$4500 for five-year membership of Bruce Stadium.

The deal takes in guaranteed covered seating to all Raiders, Brumbies and Cosmos games.

Punters pay a one-off joining fee of \$500 and then an annual fee of \$300 for three years under the plan unveiled in the city last week.

Other benefits such as access to concert tickets for stadium events are also on offer.

"It sounds good on

paper," one prominent soccer fan told *Inside Soccer*.

"But I can't see it being any great advantage to us.

"We might get a few extra fans from league or union who would come to our bigger games.

"Maybe I am wrong but I just can't see it working too well.

"But it would be a terrific idea if the three major codes actually worked together for the general sporting market instead of fighting for small pieces of the cake."

Diamond member ticket holders are being asked to stump up \$3000 in joining fees and \$300 a year for five years.

\$7500 plus \$600 a year buys gold mem-

bership for life to Sydney Football Stadium and Sydney Cricket Ground.

"We believe the transitory population in Canberra is happiest with this form of membership," Allison Theobald, Bruce Stadium Marketing Manager told the Canberra Times.

"As far as other venues are concerned, you really have to ask how long the waiting list for those places are and how long it will take to become a member.

"We're starting from scratch, really, so we are still looking at ways of adding to the value of the membership by setting up alliances with other organisations and companies."

Scottish compact league no example says players' boss

By Phil Gordon

Scottish soccer is facing a crisis with clubs in the first division worried about the increasingly possible threat of extinction.

While the country's top 10 clubs in the new breakaway premier league are rolling on the crest of a wave with increased crowds and television revenue, some of the clubs on the next rung down in the first division are facing bankruptcy.

Now the Scottish Professional Footballers' Association (SPFA) has reacted to a poll among its members and called on the premier league to expand from 10 to 16 teams urgently before the start of next season.

If they don't do that, they claim, there are real fears that several of the country's most famous clubs could be heading for closure.

All 10 first division clubs are steadily losing money with most paying the price of investing heavily in new stadiums or large squads of players in recent seasons in a vain bid to break into the top division.

But with just one side being promoted and only one coming down, Scotland's middle-income clubs fear they are now passing the point of no return.

The SPFA agrees and has begged the SPL to expand to 14 or 16 clubs.

The problem is not as acute in the lower two divisions where generally smaller, part-time clubs survive on far smaller budgets and expectations.

"It is mostly the clubs in the first division who are finding it difficult to survive," said SPFA

chief executive Tony Higgins.

"Over the next few years we have to find a nucleus of clubs who can come into the top division."

Higgins is meeting premier league representatives this week to press his case after the players' survey indicated a general unhappiness with the premier league this season.

The league is already committed to increasing to 12 teams in June 2000, but Higgins wants a bigger league sooner.

FOOTNOTE: At a time when the cries are up for Australian soccer to regress to a 10 team NSL the Scottish lesson may be a potent one to heed.

John Lang proved that the way out of recession is to expand, to build – it could just be that an 18 team NSL would be the salvation of our game.

NSL STARS

BUDDY FARAH Marconi Fairfield

By Andrew Davis

Buddy Farah is a young man with a bright future in football. He is in demand throughout the NSL yet Marconi want to hang on to him, a great credit to himself.

Farah was born and bred in the western suburbs of Sydney.

He grew up around St Johns Park and went to High School at Patrician Brothers Fairfield.

Whilst there he captained the A grade soccer side and was voted sports boy of the year.

He played in the NSW and Australian schoolboys side and also played for Paramatta Melita in the under 13s and 14s before going to Sydney United for a season before ending up at Marconi.

During all this time Farah played as a striker which may surprise some considering how well he plays at stopper these days.

Farah has played alongside the likes of Christian Care and Mauro Van Cylenberg since they were 11.

He looks back on those schoolkid days with rose coloured glasses.

"At a young age you could have fun, that is why you look back on it with much pleasure. The game is all so serious now, back then you just went out to have fun," he says.

During his younger days one club blocked his way to collecting trophies.

At Melita he learnt a lot from guys like Paul Souris and Gabriel Mendez, and Raul Blanco always had a word of advice.

Both the 13 and 14 teams made the grand final only to lose in them to Marconi.

Then a move by one of his coaches, Phil Pavela, saw Farah move to the Sydney United 15s



side.

Here he teamed up with Mauro Van Cylenberg and together they scored 30 goals each.

Once more his side made the grand final and once more they lost to Marconi.

It ended up being 4-2 and the Bossley Park side included the likes of Harry Kewell and Brett Emerton.

"It is great to see Harry do so well," says Buddy, "back then he had pace and played at left back but he certainly has blossomed quickly."

"Brett had great pace

even back then."

During this time Buddy knocked back a chance to play as striker for NSW something he regrets now.

"Back then I was not really interested but I am unhappy with that decision now, but you live and learn."

Then came the decision that would change Buddy's life, his decision to leave Sydney United for Marconi.

"All the politics around Sydney United made me unsure about my own future at the club. At the time Mick Labbozetta's son was my best mate and Mick suggested I

come across and trial at Marconi.

"Eddie McPherson and John Haynes were in charge over there and myself and another United player trialed for the one spot and they went for me.

"A year later Lee Sterrey came across from Sydney United and he moved me from up front into defence.

"The team went on to win everything over the next few years under Lee."

Farah became the first person to join the Marconi trainee-



Gabriel Mendez: inspiration

ship system where he would also go to college two days a week as well as playing for the club.

"Lee helped me out a lot and I believe being a striker in the past helps me to read the play and know what to expect from my opponents.

"In the game against Sydney Olympic Scott Baille's header was something I saw coming and was able to be in the right place at the right time to clear off the line.

"As a striker I would have done exactly what Scott did.

"Mark Babic and Dominic Longo are professionals and they have taught me the tactical and verbal game, and how to behave both on and off the park, there can not be better tutors than them.

"Those two are in the side ahead of me so I must be patient and bide my time.

"I was playing in the Olyroo side until a knee injury last year and that is a team I want to get back into desperately, it is my number one ambition.

"I have had a lot of niggling injuries in the past, including three knee operations in the last couple of years.

"I put it down to muscle fatigue and pure bad luck."

Last year Buddy made his NSL debut against Adelaide City.

"What a day, my first game and I was to mark Damien Mori," he recalled for *Inside Soccer*.

"Zoran Matic taught me a lot and it gave me a boost that Zoran had confidence enough in me to let me mark Mori.

"Frank Farina is a different coach altogether there is no comparison between the two coach's techniques and tactics.

"Frank uses different training exercises each week and uses his European experience as well.

"I really enjoy training under him.

"The lads at the club are brilliant, I have known many of the young boys for many years and it was not too long ago I was watching the likes of Brad Maloney on TV and now I am playing with him.

"It really is a dream come true."

Along the way

Buddy has seen his career come off the tracks, but every time he has bounced back and he says he has learnt from every mistake he has made and uses it to motivate himself to greater heights.

"Everyone makes mistakes," he admits, "but you can learn from these experiences.

"When I get on the field comments made in the newspapers about me just mean I want to prove these people wrong. It woke me up when I was sent back to Youth League this season. I wanted

to fight back and play first team again.

"I do not give up and I think I have proved this by returning to the first grade team last week."

I think the best example of Buddy's commitment to the game is Marconi's first game of the pre-season.

They all travelled

down to Canberra to play the Rockets in a bus full to overflowing (as both the senior and youth team went).

It meant quite a few hours on the bus.

Buddy played first grade that day and did not get home until after midnight after leaving around 11am.

Most players would be unhappy with all this but Buddy also turned 21 that day.

To so many it is such an important day and yet Farah sacrificed it to play for Marconi.

He is a player who eats, drinks and lives football: "The first thing I do when I get to my Dad's service station, where I work, is open the newspaper to the soccer section.

"I love European football and have played across there in the Vereggio tournament against the likes of Manchester United and Bologna (who I scored against from fullback).

"One day I aim to play over there but I want to make my name here first."

Hopefully Buddy Farah will bounce back from lessons well learnt recently for if anything he is a fighter.

Hopefully he also has the patience to bide his time for a first team spot and let his football do the talking.

If he does then his dream of first team football and the Olyroos will surely come into being.



And the hot goss

Strong points about your game: Mobile, can play with both feet just as well, alert and verbal. I believe I can lead well.

Favourite OS teams: Liverpool (I hate Man Utd), Inter Milan, Real Madrid.

Partner: Kelly (she has been great and been on the scene for quite a while now, a real encouragement to me)

Favourite TV: Australia's Most Wanted, Melrose Place.

Favourite Position on the field: Striker

Favourite Coach: Lee Sterrey

Favourite pastime away from football: Golf

Favourite Food: My Mum's home made Tabouli!

Wolves player in Euro transfer row with Adelaide

By Bruce Campbell

As reported in last week's issue of *Inside Soccer* young Wolves striker Kosta Salapasidis has headed for Europe - but to Spain rather than Greece.

In an official media release the club has announced on Friday: "Kosta Salpasidis has travelled to Spain to finalise an agreement that will see him transfer to Sociedad Deportiva Compostela."

A fee in the region of \$A1 million has been suggested by the club which paid

\$35,000 for him when he transferred from Adelaide City this season after spending a period at Brandon Park last term on loan.

Salapasidis has struggled to reproduce his earlier bright form in this season's Ericsson Cup, possibly with the overseas move weighing heavily on his mind.

A Greek First Division club had reportedly made an \$800,000 bid for the player but the Wolves opted instead for Compostela's higher bid which is reckoned to be actually worth \$A1.2 million.

Compostela are cur-

rently playing in the Spanish Segund Division.

And in a late twist to the transfer tale, which is sure to set the sparks flying, last week Adelaide City apparently accepted a \$110,000 offer from Wollongong in full settlement of the 40% transfer-on payment inserted into the player's contract by the NSL Tribunal.

The Zebras, who are now \$350,000 light, are set to demand an ASF inquiry believing that they were deliberately misled.

Meanwhile Salapasidis flew out to join his new club on Friday.

Ned starring at TSV

PLAYING IN England has many benefits for Aussie expat players, one of the most obvious being that they are constantly in the press spotlight, even being highlighted back home.

That allows them to stay in the thoughts of the national coach.

One of the major complaints of Aussies playing in Greece in the last ten years has been the opposite, that they have become almost totally forgotten.

Ned Zelic (pictured) is one of Australia's biggest name players yet he has suffered a



similar fate of late with his movements scarcely reported.

Also a club mate of Zelic at TSV Munchen 1860 is young Aussie striker Paul Agostino.

"Paul Agostino was injured early this season and has not played much since then," writes Martin Dietze

from Germany.

"Ned Zelic has been one of the best in his team since he joined 1860.

"He started in a rather defensive role, then played in midfield for a while."

Neither player has been on the scoreboard this season.

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Ooh-ah-Can-berra

It might have been borrowed from England but there is a new chant going up at Bruce Stadium which might suggest that the Cosmos are not quite the dead duck everyone thinks



Last season's photo call at Parliament House caught the Cosmos in an ebullient mood. Despite high-profile off the park happenings the season started badly and finished worse. This season the season started even worse but there looks to be a few rays of sunshine on the horizon.

PHOTOS Andrew Dawson

I WENT BACK to Canberra for the recent match against Adelaide City with the promise that I would write without any bias.

Passion was left behind on the beach at Corrimal and instead I was going to soul search.

In short, I had resigned myself to writing an obituary for the Novell Canberra Cosmos Soccer Club, the once beautiful cygnet that had somehow become such an ugly duckling.

On the road down I thought of all the players currently with other clubs who could have built a side capable of winning a Top Six spot in this NSL.

Goalkeeper: Stevie Mautone (Reading) Defenders: Gordon Hunter Dundee, Dale Wingell (Perth state league), Richard Watson (Stranraer), Michael Garcia (Perth Glory), Paul Dee (Bonnyrigg), Jason Dunn (Belconnen United and still the best defender in Canberra), Ante Juric (Sydney Olympic). Midfielders: Gus Cerro (Malaysia), Vince Grella (Empoli), Paul Wade (now retired), Willie Hastie (Gippsland). Strikers: John Markovski (Perth Glory), Marko Perinovic and Lachlan Armstrong (both Gippsland).

Maybe I have even missed a couple out but I

believe that few of the current players would make it into a side from that squad.

Sitting in the press area at the partly rebuilt Bruce Stadium I was even predicting the smallest Canberra crowd in NSL history.

After all, it was a Monday night and they had been bottom of the league for over two years.

That the Cosmos hadn't won a game since January 1997 was no cause for comfort either.

Gone Mike Lyons, gone Branko Culina, gone also Rale Rasic, sacked after the most disastrous tenure in Canberra's all-time NSL history.

And fifteen minutes before kick off my worst fears were being realised.

There was nobody there.

Strangely, however, the press area was packed.

Three from Radio Triple SSS, one from ABC Radio, three TV camera crews plus the in-house video boys, two from the Canberra Times, one from Studs Up, one from AAP – and me, representing the nation's finest.

Somebody even joked that there were more in the press area than the stand.

But the turf looked lush, almost *too* good to play football on.

The team had been slaughtered in the press, too.

By Bruce Campbell

They were useless, a bunch of rejects who weren't as good as the local state league players. They should have gone along with Rasic.

Mark Wallace, sports editor of the Canberra

have gone too.

But would anyone have cared? There was nobody at the game after all.

And then with the clock ticking up to kick off time they came in, and came in, and just

excess of 2,000 so was very pleasantly shocked when I heard the official crowd.

At last, a club who were putting out a real figure – they didn't even include



Cosmos chairman Ian Knop; leading the Cosmos in difficult times

Times, even suggested that the board should

kept on coming. I counted a crowd in

the free tickets. Warmed by the fact that

at least the loyal soccer die-hards cared I actually started to enjoy the match.

These lads *could* play, they *did* have heart and, in truth, they had the better of the game.

Adelaide City played the typical Zoran Matic style sitting back in their own third where the brilliance of Alex Tobin and Milan Ivanovic controlled any real threat to their goal.

But the Cosmos at least had a go. Little Leo Langone buzzed about all night working his socks off.

If he possessed a serious shot the Cosmos might have even won their first game of the season.

At the back Ivan Zelic showed signs of coming back to form while Lindsay Wilson looked, at times, a class act.

He was left with just too much to do, however, and in the end that, plus the fact that there was no experience at the back to pull the strings, cost them the goal.

Vilson Knezevic, for once, was blameless. He had probably his finest ever game in the NSL.

But the thing that impress me most was THAT chant.

After about half an hour it started to go up. OOH AH CAN BERA ... OOH AH CAN BERA ... OOH AH CAN BERA ...

Was this staid Canberra, where they clap

football games?

And the crowd erupted as Langone continually surged through the holes in the City midfield.

They were cheering, yelling and screaming. This WAS atmosphere.

OK, 2,000 isn't exactly a crowd to have wet dreams about and it will still have the club's accountant doing back flips but it is better than any other club in Australian soccer could attract while anchored at the bottom of the league.

Some of the lesser lights of past years NSLs could only muster a couple of hundred to their games.

The point?

The people of Canberra care. And why shouldn't they have a team in the NSL?

If the league hadn't been so backward in 1986 the likes of George Kulscar and Ned Zelic would have pulled on a Cosmos shirt – and the countless other future stars swept aside in the flotsam and jetsam of constant league reconstruction.

If the club can get its act together off the park, and that might be a bigger task than getting a winning side together on it, then it could have a future.

If they can draw 2,000 on a Monday night for a pointless team how many will cheer a team in the Top 6?

Ooh ah Can berra.

VALE Jimmy McKay



Jimmy McKay and the '74 Socceroos. The Scots-born striker is immortalised in the annals of Australian soccer history for that goal against South Korea which took the Aussies to the World Cup finals in Germany.

By Paul Millar

Jimmy Mackay, the soccer star who scored the goal that took Australia to its only World Cup final appearance, died in Melbourne on Friday morning after suffering a heart attack.

Jimmy Rooney, his close friend and Australian team-mate in the 1974

squad, said the game had lost a legend.

"Jim Mackay was a world class player, a clever player who had vision ahead of his time," Rooney said.

Rooney, who was Mackay's room-mate on internationals, said the 54-year-old had suffered a massive heart attack while driving.

On today's standards

Mackay would have been a millionaire from his playing career, but the pittance that he received from his internationals forced him to continue working in the building trade.

"It's a big shock not just to me but to the rest of the team, we were all so close," Rooney said.

"He was a legend in the

game, but you would never know it to talk to him, he was a guy who liked a beer, never put any weight on and never got drunk," Rooney said.

Mackay, who came here as a 20 year-old from Scotland, represented Australia 52 times, in 31 full internationals from 1970 to 1975.

The midfielder scored a stunning 35 metre goal

against South Korea in Hong Kong which was enough to secure a place for the Socceroos in Munich in 1974.

Jack Reilly, the goalkeeper in the 1974 World Cup team was shattered to hear the news saying his former team-mate never had an enemy in the world.

"Even the bastards liked him, he was just such a

lovely fella a great bloke, a real character," Reilly said.

"He was the last one of us you would expect to go first," Reilly said.

Mackay played for Melbourne Croatia, South Melbourne and Sydney Hakoah in Australia after moving from Scotland.

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Captain Fozzie

By Ted Simmons

Australian Socceroo midfielder Craig Foster has been made captain of English first division club Crystal Palace.

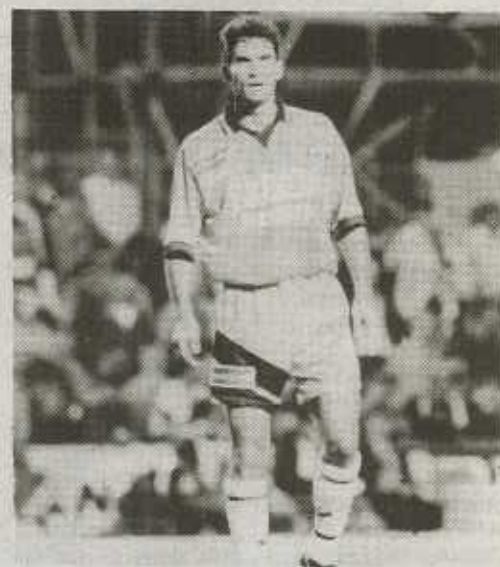
Foster transferred earlier this season to Palace from Portsmouth after being signed at the time when Terry Venables was Socceroo coach and Portsmouth chairman.

"Everything is going well at Palace and it's great to be at a club like this," Foster said.

"I'm quite proud to be wearing the captains armband especially if we can win some matches and move up the table."

Crystal Palace is midway in division one with eight wins from 19 matches and well clear of the relegation zone.

Foster was formerly with Sydney national league club Marconi before he



moved into the English competition.

Another former Socceroo Andrew Bernal was captain of Reading and Foster joins him as an English club leader.

EURO CUPS SET FOR NEW SEASON

by Mike Collett
in Lausanne

European soccer's worst-kept secret was finally disclosed last Friday when UEFA officially announced its expanded 32-team European Champions' League and 121-team UEFA Cup tournaments.

Both competitions will start next season and they herald the start of a new era of virtually year-round European club soccer.

Next season's European programme starts with the first round of the Intertoto Cup on June 19 1999 and ends with the Champions League final on May 24, 2000 - just 17 days before the European Football championship begins in Belgium and the Netherlands.

In all, 526 matches will be played in the two competitions, with, for the first time, UEFA Cup matches taking place in February and with only one week, rather than the two or three weeks which have been the tradition for so long, separating first and second leg matches.

The new format sees the end of the European Cup Winners Cup which

started in the 1960-61 season. From next season domestic cup winners will go into the UEFA Cup.

Gerhard Aigner, UEFA's general secretary said: "I am delighted we have reached this stage in our negotiations and that at last there is light at the end of the tunnel."

"We still have many many details to negotiate regarding new statutes and rankings."

"But at least now there are no major problems to overcome."

That point, however, overlooks the redistribution of the hundreds of millions of dollars of revenue generated by the Champions' League.

The money issue was one of the central tenets of a proposed breakaway European Super League planned by the Milan-based entrepreneurs Media Partners.

While UEFA has seen off that threat and ensured its solidarity with the clubs and national federations, the money issue has still not been resolved.

The major clubs want a bigger share of the \$A744.65 million revenue raised by the sale of

TV rights and marketing.

"We have to go very slowly on that issue," said Guido Tognoni, who has masterminded the reform of the competitions.

"We are not talking about opening a corner shop here, we are involved in the biggest ever shake-up of European soccer and every detail must be right."

Aigner said the clubs were solidly behind UEFA and that all talk of a breakaway was now over.

Although UEFA's intentions have been clear for some time and the announcement was no surprise, there were still one or two items only made official for the first time.

The first was that the eight teams who finish in third place in the eight four-team groups in the Champions' League will not be eliminated from European competition and will instead transfer into the UEFA Cup at the third round stage.

Only the teams finishing bottom of the eight Champions' League groups will go out.

There will also be changes made to teams

who qualify as "fair play" winners with three spots available via that route.

In all 72 teams will take part in the Champions' League but 40 of them - mainly from the smaller European countries - will be eliminated during three qualifying rounds between July and August.

The 16 which make it through to the third qualifying round before being eliminated move across to the first round of the UEFA Cup.

The 32 teams comprising the competition proper consist of the defending champions, plus 15 teams from the top nine-ranked countries together with the 16 who have fought their way through the qualifying rounds.

Those 32 are then split into eight groups of four with the top two in each group advancing to the second group phase consisting of 16 teams in four groups of four.

The top two in those groups then advance to the quarter-finals which are played as a two-legged knockout, the same as the semifinals.

The final, as always,

consists of one match, which means that the two finalists will each have played 17 matches to reach that stage - and as many as 23 in the unlikely event they have survived from the opening qualifying round.

The 119-team UEFA Cup starts with 82 teams in the qualifying round next August.

The 41 winners of those matches will be joined by the 16 teams eliminated from the final qualifying phase of the Champions' League, plus the defending champions, domestic cup winners from the top 17-ranked nations, other highly-ranked qualifiers from the major countries and three teams from the Intertoto Cup.

That makes a total of 96 teams who will comprise the first round proper.

They will be whittled down to 24 teams by the third round stage when they will be joined by the eight third-placed teams from the Champions' League.

The competition then proceeds on a knockout basis until the final, which is set for May 17, 2000.

We must win the big homers: Stange

By Scott Coghlan and John White

Perth coach Bernd Stange warned his players they must maintain their perfect record at home before they faced Marconi Fairfield in the National Soccer League blockbuster at Perth Oval last Sunday.

Prior to that match the Glory were yet to concede a point at home this season, but lost to lowly Newcastle in a shock result and since have been hit by injury before the mega clash of the season.

Stange said it was vital his team won its home games.

"We need the big points, we can lose games in

Gippsland or Newcastle, but it's very important to win at home," he said.

"If we had a game on Sunday here against Manchester United or Bayern-Munich, I would tell my players we must win the game."

"We can win each game at Perth Oval because we have a good team and we are strong enough to beat Marconi."

Marconi coach Frank Farina also outlined the importance of a clash which many saw as the Grand Final preview - even at this early stage.

"This was a huge game for us and a tremendous challenge playing Perth in Perth," he said.



Farina: big match

Marconi: we're just choirboys

By Fred Legget

Look at the scoreboard: That is Marconi coach Frank Farina's answer to those who have pointed the finger at the Stallions as being 'too physical' in their play this season.

Adelaide Sharks and former Marconi boss Manfred Schaefer was critical of the Stallions style of play after his side ended up on the wrong end of a 4-0 scoreline, and more recently Sydney Olympic coach Branko Culina risked a possible fine to go on record as to what he thought of the way Marconi played in the Sydney derby.

However, Marconi coach Frank Farina is amazed at any allegations that his side are overly physical in their approach, and his answer is for opposing-coaches to look to the disciplinary record of the Stallions.



Said Farina: "Yes it can be annoying when some coaches label us a physical side, or that we have been over physical."

"While we won't take a backward step, my

answer to those who criticise us, unfairly in my view, is to take a look at our disciplinary record.

"I think we've got maybe 8 yellow cards so far this season, and

compared to a lot of other teams in the league, we look like choirboys!

"If anything the criticism has helped motivate the players more."

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THE MELBOURNE BOOMERANG

COMMENT & COMPIATION BY BRUCE CAMPBELL

The Early Week Stories

Home For A Rest

GLASGOW: Monday New Celtic striker Mark Viduka announced today he was returning to Australia "for a rest".

Australian international Viduka, 23, joined the Scottish champions only last Wednesday in a \$A8.06 million deal with Croatia Zagreb and had been expected to make his debut on Sunday night against Hearts.

Initial reports suggested the player, who has dual Australian and Croatian

nationality, was booking into a clinic after appearing depressed.

But later a statement from his management group IMG said the player was returning to Australia for a rest.

Viduka said: "It was only after I arrived in Glasgow last week that I started to realise how much I had been affected by events in Zagreb over the last few months where I had been under enormous personal pressure.

"I arrived ready and wanting to play but it finally came apparent that, having thought a change would be as good as a rest, I realised I badly needed a rest.

"It would have been relatively easy for me to cover this up for a few weeks but this would not have been fair on the club, the fans or my family.

"I just hope that everyone realises this is not easy for me and appreciates my honesty. (Ed - cough!)

"I realise this is causing great embarrassment and disappointment at the club who have been very supportive and understanding."

Mark Returns

By Louise Robson

LONDON: Monday Glasgow Celtic soccer

club today confirmed that striker Mark Viduka had returned to Australia but denied reports that its latest signing had checked into a clinic for psychiatric treatment.

Mystery surrounded the whereabouts of the former Melbourne Knights player following two days of drama and conflicting statements about his state of mind.

News of Viduka's departure from Celtic emerged late last night when the club issued a statement saying he had quit.

It is still unclear whether a second statement announcing that the

player had checked into the Wheathamstead private clinic in Aberdeen was actually issued by Celtic and inquiries today were unable to establish whether such an establishment existed in either Britain or Australia.

But in a statement released today by his agents Viduka, who only last week received medical clearance for his \$A8.06 million transfer from Croatia Zagreb, today pledged that he would return to play for the Scottish club.

No further details were immediately available but the club said they would make further comment following the match against Hearts of Midlothian in Edinburgh.

The 23-year-old Victorian asked fans to be patient while he returned to full fitness.

It also emerged today that Viduka, who has Australian and Croatian nationality, had missed training on Friday and Saturday for the game at Hearts.

However Celtic said there had been no indication of psychological problems.

IMG spokesman Bernie Mandich stressed that Viduka had not quit Celtic but was unable to give any further information except that his

client was expected back "soon".

"There's no personal problems with him; there's no girl problems, but it appears everything is on hold at the moment.

"He is a little confused as to why they put out that statement."

Another IMG spokesman Claes Elefalk said: "We are all hoping for a very swift recovery. He has some personal problems he needs to sort out and get himself back on track.

"But he is definitely a Celtic player and will hopefully be back soon."

Legal Advice

By Louise Robson

LONDON: Monday Celtic soccer club was today taking legal advice over whether to pay Mark Viduka's \$A8.06 million transfer fee following the shock departure of the former Croatia Zagreb and Melbourne Knights player.

Celtic chairman Fergus McCann said the Glasgow-based club was taking legal advice before paying the fee, 10 per cent of which is due to his original Melbourne club.

He said they were also seeking clarification from Croatia and taking legal advice on whether they could sue the 23-year-old Australian striker.

"We will want to get several questions answered and clarified," McCann said.

"Naturally we feel very much let down in view of our efforts to get the player."

Celtic lost 2-1 away to Hearts in Edinburgh following two days of drama and confusion over Viduka's sudden change of heart.

The Soccerroo striker arrived in Scotland on Wednesday and had been registered by the club following medical checks.

McCann said there were no indications of medical problems and Viduka trained with the team on Thursday, but "within 36

WHAT A WEEK FOR Australian soccer, what a week for Celtic and Mark Viduka. Once again our sport was on all of the back pages for all of the wrong reasons.

We have had drugs innuendos, Croatian mobsters (that was a beauty and my personal favourite), depression, women trouble - and now the real reason, cash.

It would seem that the bosses at Croatia Zagreb have as much honour as a low crawling snake. Don't do hand-shake deals with them, just ask Mark Viduka.

Personally, I think the V Bomber did a fantastically gutsy thing. To be able to stand up in front of the blood-crazed Scottish media and walk out took a lot of the things he cannons into the back of the net.

If CroZag weren't going to do the right thing then big Marko, as they call him down Sauchiehall Street way, wasn't going to let tem get a bawbee.

Well done Mark, and another lesson for would be stars looking to jet out to life in Europe. Get a bloody good manager first - not afterwards.

Here for your amusement, and for the history books, is a collection of the best stories to have come across my editorial desk this week.

hours of his arrival claimed it was impossible to carry on".

"Based on his attitude and behaviour in the last few days we do not expect to see him back, but what we are hearing today was slightly different," he said.

"But to us the position he took was he would not be playing football again

either here or elsewhere. At the time of the medical he indicated no problems.

"... We feel very let down at the way things have panned out, especially in view of the efforts made to sign the player and bring him here."

McCann voiced his fears for Viduka's future

with the Scottish champion based on the fact that the Australian has so far turned his back on every effort made by Celtic to understand the root of his problems.

"He was offered medical counselling, his parents to be flown to Glasgow from Australia, a

driver, an extended Christmas break and a member of Celtic staff with him at all times," McCann said.

"These offers were all rejected. Mark advised that he was depressed, unhappy, didn't want to play football. He had difficulties in Zagreb but

change of hotel, a furnished apartment, a car and a would not elaborate upon them."





Viduka in Paradis: Mark Viduka at Parkhead with his girlfriend – a Celt for a day. Now it looks likely that he will be on his way back to the Scottish champions

Viduka's whereabouts were unclear today, following earlier and conflicting reports he had returned to Australia or checked in to a clinic in Aberdeen.

Croatian Mobsters

By Paul Millar and Louise Robson

MELBOURNE: Tuesday afternoon striker Mark Viduka's stunning walk-out on Glasgow Celtic could be linked to Croatian mobsters planning to show in on his multi-million dollar transfer from Croatia Zagreb.

Celtic offered Viduka a dyguard because of the fact he was a target for Croatian mafia, according to a report in Scotland's Daily Record newspaper.

Celtic officials were concerned gangsters may have planned to cash in on the 23-year-old Australian soccer international's hefty share of his million transfer fee, the paper said.

Viduka fled Celtic 36 hours after arriving from Zagreb last week claiming he needed a rest because he had been under enormous personal pressure.

Although he claimed he was suffering emotional stress, it appeared out of character for the 23-year-old, who stands to collect about \$3 million of the transfer fee.

Viduka's Australian manager Bernie Mandic said he knew nothing of

any threat to the forward.

But reports from Glasgow say the big Victorian was "visibly shaken" after

receiving a mystery phone call from Croatia on Friday night and refused to leave his hotel.

Celtic managing director Fergus McCann wants to get to the bottom of the matter claiming: "There is a lot more to this than Mark Viduka suddenly saying he has psychological problems."

Celtic is expected to conduct an investigation into a series of erratic incidents in the lead up to Viduka's transfer.

He is reported to have hit a fan in a stand up fist fight after training and charged at a journalist who wrote that his form was poor.

Viduka, meanwhile, remains in his Zagreb flat but could be heading back to Scotland after recovering with his family in Melbourne over Christmas.

His European agent Claes Elefalk said Viduka had a change of heart after fleeing Glasgow.

"He may have told Celtic that he didn't want to play for them but he has changed his mind," Elefalk said.

"He is coming back, that is for sure. We have spoken to Celtic several times today and we feel that we are getting better already."

However, in Sydney, his Australian agent Mandic said it was unclear whether Viduka would play again.

"His attitude is that if

he doesn't believe he can play at the level he knows he can play, then he will not be putting the boots on again," Mandic said.

"You have to have the desire ... you hit a brick wall and say you need a break."

In the meantime Celtic has demanded Celtic pay Viduka's transfer fee by tomorrow.

Zagreb president Zlatko Canjuga said he was prepared to refer the matter to soccer's governing bodies, FIFA and UEFA unless the full fee was paid within 24 hours.

"Celtic know they have to honour the agreement," Canjuga said.

"By Wednesday they have to make clear how they will meet Croatia's demands."

Celtic confirmed today it had not paid any transfer money to Croatia but declined to make any further comment until it received legal advice on the payment of the fee and the possibility of suing the errant player.

"No monies have actually been paid for Mark Viduka yet," a club spokeswoman said.

Burnout

By Paul Millar

Melbourne: Tuesday Stressed-out Australian soccer star Mark Viduka could have seriously damaged his mental health if he had not walked out on Celtic and Brazilian ace Ronaldo could be heading the same way, a sports psychologist said today.

Dr Michelle Pain of Monash University said Viduka had probably done the right thing by walking out on Glasgow

Celtic only days after transferring from Croatia Zagreb.

"He might be just burnt out from the sport," Dr Pain said.

"I think Ronaldo's going through the same thing."

"Both have enormous pressure placed on them ... Viduka had to perform in Croatia and for Australia while Ronaldo had to play for his club and every single game for Brazil."

"They are under physical pressure to play in every game and they are also under emotional stress to perform well."

The Brazilian, at 22 a year younger than Viduka, stunned the soccer world when his name did not appear on the original team sheet to play in the World Cup final against France.

There were reports he was taken to hospital after a convulsive fit, there were stories of an epileptic fit and like Viduka he was said to be depressed.

Ronaldo played in the final and there was speculation that he was forced to turn out to fulfil sponsorship requirements.

Viduka went walkabout days after signing an \$8 million contract with the Scottish champions, saying he needed to rest.

His management team said he was suffering emotional burnout and just needed time to

himself.

Viduka, who was always under the spotlight in Zagreb because he was a personal friend of

the President Franjo Tudjman, never expected the same attention when he moved to Scotland but soon realised how wrong he was in soccer-mad Glasgow.

Dr Pain said it was a brave move to walk out on such a lucrative contract which would have made the Victorian an instant millionaire.

"Elite athletes like this find themselves under constant pressure, he's probably doing the best thing psychologically," she said.

Dr Pain said if Viduka had not taken a stand he could have ongoing personal problems.

"He could have suffered persistent psychological problems ... asking himself what use am I if I do not play soccer? He should do something he likes outside soccer for a while," she said.

Dr Pain said Viduka could pick up the pieces in a year because the talent and the skills would still be there.

His Australian agent Bernie Mandic said it was unclear whether Viduka would play again.

"His attitude is that if he doesn't believe he can play at the level he knows he can play, then he will not be putting the boots on again," Mandic told Channel Nines Today programme.

"You have to have the desire."

"It's no more than what many of us hit from time

to time - you hit a brick wall and say you need a break."

"When you've been playing at the level he's been playing basically all his life, it becomes a little bit difficult to maintain that consistently, especially if you're exposed to the sort of pressures he was exposed to for the last six months in Croatia."

The Sun newspaper in Britain reported that Viduka "sobbed his heart out" while speaking to Croatia Zagreb teammate Goran Juric for two hours after Celtic training on Thursday - saying he felt "hated" at his new club.

No Pay

By Bryn Palmer

GLASGOW: Thursday Marko Viduka's agent insisted the runaway Celtic striker backed the Parkhead club's stance on withholding payment of his £3million transfer fee until he is ready to return to action.

The Australian international is still in Zagreb after fleeing Glasgow just five days after signing for the Scottish champions, claiming he is not 'mentally fit' to play football.

Celtic managing director Fergus McCann was understood to have flown to Croatia on Tuesday along with financial director Eric Riley in an attempt to solve the dispute with Croatia Zagreb over the details of Viduka's transfer.

Zagreb have indicated they will refer the case to a UEFA or FIFA tribunal if they do not receive assurances about how and when Celtic intend to pay the full £3m figure negotiated.

But McCann is understandably reluctant to splash out the entire fee given that Viduka is believed to be due as much as £1m of it personally after a specially-struck agreement with his former club.

The Parkhead chief has taken legal advice about withholding payment with Viduka unlikely to be in any state to play - if he returns at all - until the new year at the earliest.

And Bernie Mandic, the Australian conducting Viduka's affairs on behalf of his management company IMG, agreed it was "debatable" whether Celtic should have pay up given his client's behaviour.

"Marko has not cost Celtic a single pound to date and it is debatable whether they will have to pay at the moment," he said.

"But that is what Marko is trying to say. He is not after money from Celtic and he would prefer that until he can perform on the park for them that no money should exchange hands."

Viduka is still expected to return to his family home in Melbourne by the end of the week and a number of Australian clubs are already believed to be interested in acquiring his services should he not return to Scotland.

Soccer: It's my game

With Joe Russo

The farce of the National League draw is becoming more and more obvious as the season goes on.

Recently in Sydney the four local clubs played within a few kilometres of each other on the same Sunday afternoon.

At Edensor Park Sydney United played home to Northern Spirit while at Marconi Stadium the Stallions played Sydney Olympic.

With the ABC covering the latter game live on television at 5.00pm it was nearly a case of both games on at the same time until a last minute decision was made to move the Sydney United v Northern Spirit clash to a 3.00pm start.

Soccer Australia had been made aware of the problem some six weeks earlier.

The weekend just finished left Sydney, Australia's premier city, without any National league soccer with Wollongong being the nearest centre staging a game, namely the Wollongong Wolves v Gippsland Falcons clash.

Now, with all due respect to both clubs, it was hardly a clash that would make you pack up the family and head south for a Sunday afternoon drive to witness the game first hand.

A early as Round 1 we had games clashing.

South Melbourne and Carlton had their home games on at

the same time on the first Sunday afternoon of the season.

Ditto in Round 2, this time again Carlton and Melbourne Knights – just for variety!

Oh dear, Round 3, Carlton and South Melbourne on a Sunday afternoon and in Round 4 Sydney's turn, just to prove the creativity of Soccer Australia, Northern Spirit, Marconi and Sydney Olympic all having home games that weekend.

Different combination in Round 5 but back to Melbourne, with Melbourne Knights and South Melbourne sharing the 'Sunday afternoon show.'

Back to Carlton and Melbourne Knights in both Rounds 6 and 8.

Get the picture?

Despite all the factors that may be used as excuses such as television coverage, no suitable lighting at some grounds, the bye, four clubs in each of Sydney and Melbourne and so forth, it still beats me how the draw could be so bad with changes taking place 'ad hoc' and certain decisions being made on the run.

The solution is simple; no more than two games in the one city on the same weekend and never on the same day.

However, all this might not be a problem next year – especially if some clubs do not survive that far!

Armstrong heads back to Falcon Stadium

IT HAS BEEN a long and windy road that has finally taken striker Lachlan Armstrong back to Falcons Park, the ground where his NSL career first began.

The little forward actually started his senior career in Scotland with Dundee where he completed an apprenticeship in the professional game, eventually breaking into the first team in the rough and tumble of the Scottish Premier League.

A series of niggling injuries, a bout of homesickness and maybe even a mistake saw him pack his boots for his home town of Melbourne.

Snapped up by that shrewd judge of talent, Bobby McLachlan, for the then Morwell Falcons Armstrong had a good time with the Latrobe Valley club.

"Things were good at the start," he says, "but I got a chance to play in Malaysia and took it. Unfortunately Malacca wasn't the right club."

But the McLachlan connection saw him recommended to new Cosmos coach Mike Lyons and the former Everton skipper brought Armstrong to the capital city for their inaugural season in the national league.

After two seasons with Cosmos Armstrong found himself



Lachlan Armstrong: the striker finds himself back with the Falcons

unable to settle in the bush capital and soon wandered back to the bright spots of Melbourne.

Last season he stepped down a league to play with Westvale in the Victorian Division 1 and it was a move which paid off handsomely.

"I had a chance to play with the Cosmos again but decided against it," he said. "With Westvale I really began to enjoy my soccer again. I was scoring a lot of goals and all of a sudden I found out that I was really happy. I want to stay in Melbourne and there isn't really an awful lot of option for a player in my situation."

Spurning the chance to go back into full time soccer Armstrong picked up an offer for Gippsland,

his first Australian club.

Now he finds himself on a short term seven week contract which will take him up to the deadline set by the VSF for players wanting to play State League to quit the NSL.

"We'll see what happens in that time," he says. "I'm quite pleased to be playing at the Falcons with boss Stuart Munro. He is ace. I'm also looking forward to renewing my partnership with big Marko Perinovic because he is the kind of layer it is good to play off."

"Also Archie Thompson has plenty of pace, the boy has an awful lot of talent. So we might actually surprise a few people and I'll see what happens down the track."

Santa comes to Bossley Park – but there are no pressies for the Blues



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National Youth League fixture kicks off at 5.00pm

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INTERNATIONAL SPORTSFEATURE

By John Nene
in Nairobi, Kenya

Slum campaign giving hope for Kenya's soccer youngsters

A DECADE AGO, Mathare was known only as one of eastern Africa's biggest slums.

The sprawling shanty-town of nearly half a million is known for crime, prostitution and home brew liquor called chang'aa.

That was before the Mathare Youth Sports Association came along.

And long before Mathare United one of the club's 600 soccer teams qualified last month for Africa's Cup Winners Cup championship.

Until the birth of the Mathare Youth Sports Association, youngsters who lived there were ashamed of their impoverished neighborhood.

"Most of us had given up hope in life," said 23-year-old Pius Obala, MYSA's deputy chief operations manager.

"We just felt neglected, and to make matters worse, people always looked at us scornfully because we were from the Mathare slums."

"Now, we walk with our chests high, very proud to say that we're from Mathare," he added. "MYSA has changed the lives of many youngsters."

Spirits soared on October 10 when MYSA's senior team, Mathare

United, defeated the more experienced Eldoret KCC 2-1 in the Moi Golden Cup, earning a berth to represent Kenya in the prestigious Cup Winners Cup.

This delights Bob Munro, the godfather of the sports association that has transformed the lives of thousands of kids in Mathare and neighboring housing projects.

"What pleased me most was the euphoric mood throughout Mathare," the 56-year-old Canadian said.

"Tens of thousands of slum dwellers sitting in shacks with candles and kerosene lamps were all saying 'we won,' irrespective of their ethnic or religious background."

Violence often flares among members of different ethnic groups packed into Nairobi's vast shantytowns where they have moved from rural areas in hopes of a better life.

There are more than 600 soccer clubs for boys

and girls aged 10-18 in the MYSA, which is run by the youngsters themselves.

Mathare soccer teams have done well in the annual Dana and Gothia Cup tournaments in Norway.

But the association also runs an award-winning slum clean-up operation for people of all ages and a program to make kids aware of the dangers of HIV/AIDS.

Every weekend MYSA youth clean up different housing projects in Nairobi.

"Our aim is to make Mathare and Nairobi as a whole a better place to live in," said deputy garbage collection manager Isabel Mbutia. Most members of the association are brought up by single mothers in conditions of extreme poverty.

James Waitthaka, a 21-year-old who drives the garbage truck, says there is a downside to the clean-up job.

"At times we lose appetite because of the stench. Some of us get sick, but Munro organises for treatment," he said.

"Anyhow, we're proud of what we're doing."

Moses Ouma, a promising 14-year-old striker, said he liked the clean-up because "we're helping to reduce disease in the slums."

When Munro, a specialist in environmental research management and planning, was growing up outside Toronto, Canadian veterans returning from World War II introduced him to Little League baseball and ice hockey, which taught him and other nine-year-olds discipline.

"So, when I first toured Mathare, I was touched when I saw small boys playing soccer using paper balls tied with strings. I felt it was pay-back time. I had to give back what I gained from the soldiers," he said.

"That's how I formed

the MYSA in 1987."

Other MYSA projects include supporting the city's hundreds of street children when they are arrested and arraigned in court and a photography club headed by Francis Kimanthi, the captain of the champion Mathare United, who studied photo journalism on a scholarship to Hamar Folkehogskole in Norway.

The club is completing a "shootback" project for which its 30 members have photographed their daily lives and surroundings. A book of their work will be published.

"It's aimed at helping the youngsters learn a marketable skill, and tell the story with their own eyes," Munro said.

Norsk Hydro, the Norwegian chemical and fertilizer company, is principal sponsor of the association that has an annual budget of 4 million shillings (\$A 108,171).

ERICSSON CUP SOCCER



Ericsson Cup Round 11: 18-21 December

Friday 18 December

Newcastle Breakers v Melbourne Knights

Saturday 19 December

Marconi Fairfield v Carlton

Gippsland Falcons v Adelaide City

Sunday 20 December

South Melbourne v Northern Spirit

Adelaide Sharks v Wollongong Wolves

Sydney Olympic v Perth Glory

Monday 21 December

Canberra Cosmos v Brisbane Strikers

BYE: Sydney United

Breakers Stadium 8.00pm

Marconi Stadium 7.00pm

Mobil Park 7.00pm

Bob Jane Stadium 6.00pm

Hindmarsh Stadium 7.00pm

Belmore Sportsground 6.30pm

Bruce Stadium 7.00pm

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iSport training underway

www.isport.com.au



NSW State Minister Gabrielle Harrison showing an interest in iSport programme

FOLLOWING the launch of iSport at NSW Parliament House in late November local soccer administrators from all over Sydney have undergone Stage 1 training with special emphasis on streamlining the operations of this large community based sporting organisation.

The Sydney Branch of the NSWASF is responsible for the administration of soccer in the Sydney basin and its surrounding area which comprises 411 clubs and over 100,000 players. "More and more of our large volunteer base and

players now have access to the Internet," said a NSWASF official.

"I believe that our member clubs will look forward to the information it provides and will actively update the home page with news and event information including everything from registra-

tion day details to training times, soccer camp details and a whole host of other essential news."

Additional training will continue in late January as a follow up to the introductory work and will have associations primed for the 1999 NSWASF season.

Kim's Wollongong target

By Fred Legget



Marconi's stylish defender Pan-Keun Kim, on the injured list since mid November, has given Stallions coach Frank Farina hope for a Happy New Year, with the news that he could be fit to resume playing in early January.

The Korean international suffered damage to his medial ligament in mid November when Marconi trounced Adelaide Sharks 4-0, and although the depth of the Sydney side has meant that they have been able to cover the loss of such an influential player, there is little doubt that the Bossley Park faithful will be delighted to see him back in action.

Marconi coach Frank Farina revealed that Kim's injury was caused by nothing more than an accidental clash.

Said Farina: "It happened in the last two minutes of the Adelaide Sharks game."

"Kim slid into a tackle and the Adelaide player fell on him and twisted his knee, as well as bruising the outside of the bone as well, which could have been a major problem."

The Korean international is a

huge favourite at Marconi, and was revelling in his new role of right full back, after having been moved out wide from his more accustomed position of sweeper.

Said Marconi boss Farina: "With Kim at right back it gives us a little more in attack and frees Kim up as well."

"The move was targeted at giving us that extra man in the middle and adding a little bit oomph going forward."

"In the right back role Kim is excellent at going forward, he knocks in great long balls, has the vision to see things early, and he can defend as well."

Kim has set the game against Wollongong Wolves on the second of January as his comeback target.

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Matic blasts Mori and City bludgers

By Sam Lienert

A brilliant individual goal by South Melbourne striker Paul Trimboli just before halftime was enough to earn his side a 1-1 draw against Adelaide City at Hindmarsh Stadium on Sunday afternoon.

Trimboli's solo run started in his own defensive half after a clearance from an Adelaide corner kick and he controlled the ball all the way to the penalty box before scoring to level the game in the 45th minute.

City had looked to be well in control for most of the half with striker Damian Mori

converting one of a number of chances in the 35th minute to give the home side the lead.

The goal was Mori's first in five weeks but the 96th in his career and broke the all-time

ADELAIDE CITY 1 (Mori 35)
SOUTH MELBOURNE 1 (Trimboli 45)
Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Man of the Match: Paul Trimboli SMEL



Paul Trimboli: the Wizard of the Blues grabbed his side's equaliser

club goal scoring record.

Adelaide appeared headed for its fifth straight win before Trimboli's surprise counter attack and Zebras coach Zoran Matic said after the match his side should never have conceded that goal.

"We were punished for being loose in the centre of the ground, you just don't let them break away like that," Matic said.

"All you need to do is give a little nudge, give away a professional free kick and the ball gets stopped and you start again, they did that about 50 times, they were a lot smarter than us."

South Melbourne was able to hold Adelaide scoreless after the break despite playing with only 10 men for the last 35 minutes.

Striker Goran Lozanovski was given a red card early in the sec-

ond half for a crude tackle on close-checking Korean defender Dong-Ki Kim who had clearly troubled him throughout the match.

But the Zebras were still unable to convert a huge number of chances and Matic criticised Mori for failing to work hard enough to get the second goal.

"He doesn't do enough, he just makes a sprint every five minutes, he does probably a quarter of what David Terminello does during a game," Matic said.

He said his team also slackened off when Lozanovski left the field.

"We have never improved a result in my time when they lose a player because we immediately get more bludgers," Matic said.

"That always happens to us. We have never changed a draw into a win."

UTS SYDNEY OLYMPIC PERTH GLORY

Belmore Sportsground

Sunday 20 December 6.30pm kick off

(Please check daily press for changed times)



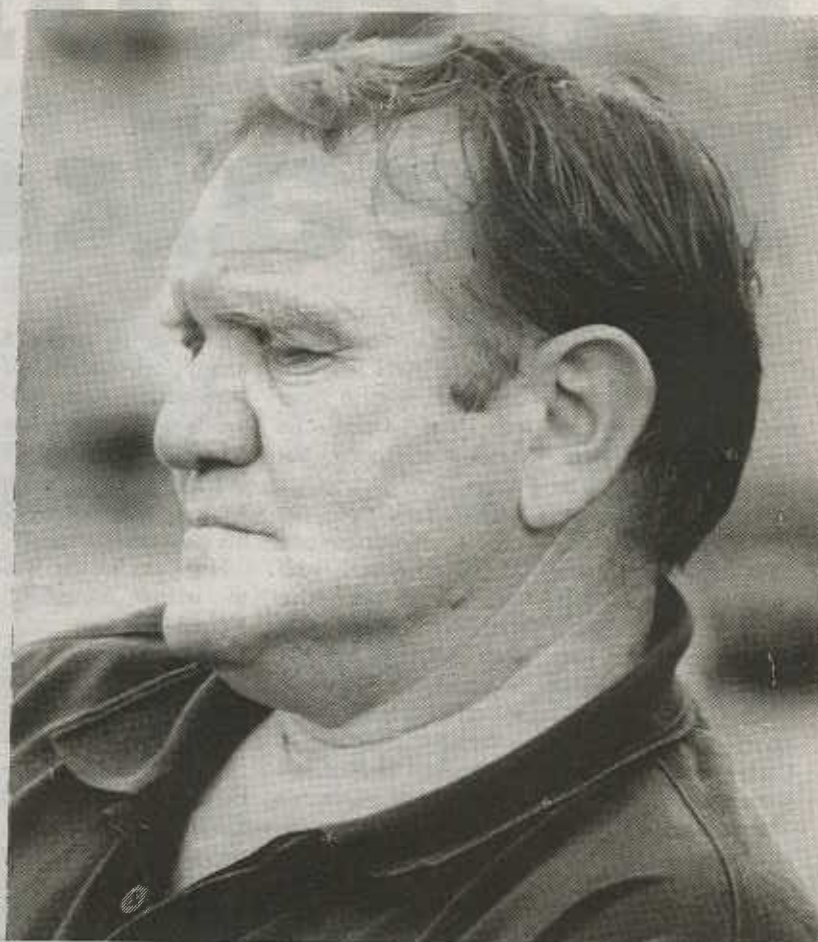
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Schaefer happy as Sharks get the lolly

Sharks coach Manfred Schaefer was happy with his side's win



A stubborn defence and the charms of lady luck combined to give the Adelaide Sharks a 1-0 win over the Melbourne Knights at Sunshine on Sunday.

Despite attacking for most of the match and creating several chances, the Knights could not find the back of the net.

Steady rain during the day also affected the pitch and players struggled to get the ball through several puddles on the flanks.

Adelaide scored their winner in the 33rd minute with a Hamilton Thorp header from an Alex Castro cross.

The goal came against the run of play after the Melbourne

Knights had done most of the attacking.

An elated Adelaide Sharks coach Manfred Schaefer was more than happy with the result.

"This is our first clean sheet. We put in a fighting performance, we played very well and deserved the three points," he said.

Knights coach Vid Horvat found the loss hard to swallow.

"This is the first time that I am really disappointed because the

players gave 100 per cent," he said.

"We dominated throughout the match but in soccer victory is everything.

"We need a bit more luck and victory will come."

Left back Ivan Jolic had the first of the Knights chances in the 19th minute, but Sharks keeper Nathan Wildy cleared his angled shot.

Tom Pondeljak almost equalised two minutes from half time,

but his looping shot from outside the box over Wildy, bounced off the far post.

The Knights were also denied in the 61st minute when Adelaide Sharks defender Richie Alagich saved a spectacular scissor kick by Ransford Banini off the line.

No matter how hard the Knights tried luck ran against them.

Striker Harry Karl rounded Wildy in the 64th minute but his angled shot was saved

off the line by defender Paul Souris and co-striker Ivan Kelic shot wide in the 67th minute.

Joel Porter had the chance to double the Sharks score two min-

utes from full time, but Knights keeper Joe Didulica cleared from close range.

A sizeable crowd of over 4000 had surged to the Knights stadium anticipating an appear-

ance by troubled striker Mark Viduka.

There was a minutes silence in sympathy for the death of World Cup Socceroo Jim Mackay who died on Friday.

**MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 0
ADELAIDE SHARKS 1 (Thorp 33)**
Venue: Knights Park
Man of the Match: Paul Souris ADSh

Harris off, but new boy McLaren spurs ten man Strikers

ROUND 9 FIXTURE: Played Monday 7 December

CANBERRA COSMOS 0 ADELAIDE CITY 1 (Veart 79)
Venue: Bruce Stadium
Man of the Match: Vilson Knezevic CANB

Veart strike beats gallant Cosmos

By Graham Cooke

Adelaide City coach Zoran Matic paid tribute to lowly Canberra after Carl Veart's late goal gave his side a tight 1-0 victory in the Round 9 NSL match at Bruce Stadium last Monday night, keeping the Cosmos winless at the bottom of the table.

Just when it seemed Canberra might finish the game with its first point of the season, Veart got away from defender Lindsay Wilson in the 78th minute to fire a shot past the exposed Cosmos goalkeeper Vilson Knezevic.

"They had motivation and commitment which my players mostly lacked," Matic said. "Canberra deserved more than they got from this game."

It was certainly the Cosmos best performance of the season, but in the end the result is not different from the other eight games it has played this season - no

points and bottom place on the table. Canberra's caretaker coach Tony Brennan said he was desperately disappointed.

"We showed the soccer we were capable of tonight," he said. "But in the end the goal was a mistake - it should never have been."

The Cosmos began strongly. Knezevic beginning a move which ended with a shot from Anthony Magnacca going just wide. Then Michael Musitano set up Peter Buljan, but Adelaide goal keeper Jason Petkovic judged the situation perfectly snatching the ball off the strikers feet. Busy midfielders Ilija Prenzovski and Leo Langone had long range efforts.

Adelaide's best opportunity of the half came when Brad Hassell drove a shot just wide of the upright. Adelaide should have taken the lead in the 50th minute when Knezevic spilled the ball straight to the feet of Dino Mennillo, but facing an open goal he sent his shot against the base of the post.

By Glenn Davis

A brave 10 man Brisbane Strikers answered a test of character in a thrilling 2-2 draw against Sydney United in the Ericsson Cup clash at Suncorp Stadium on Saturday.

The Strikers, whose only home defeat this season was to Adelaide City, suffered an early blow when nippy Sydney United midfielder Walter Ardone put the visitors ahead 1-0 in only the fifth minute.

The goal was the beginning of a devastating first half for the Strikers who had robust midfielder Jeromy Harris sent off and three other players booked by Sydney referee Matthew Breeze.

Harris was given his marching orders for a high tackle on opposing midfielder Steve Berry in the 26th minute.

If the loss of Harris, the Strikers leading goal scorer was not enough, more followed when the home side lost vet-

**BRISBANE STRIKERS 2 (Laybutt 30, McLaren 45)
SYDNEY UNITED 2 (Ardone 5, Bennett 35)**
Venue: Suncorp Stadium
Man of the Match: Stuart McLaren BRIS

eran striker Andy Harper who limped off with a hamstring strain.

The Strikers looked lethargic and were outplayed in the early stages but to their credit they dug deep and hit back with the equaliser on the half hour after a surging run forward by defender Steve Laybutt.

Laybutt started a long run and finished it off with a shot which hit the base of the upright before the ball bounced back into his path where he blasted home the equaliser. Sydney United were stung into action and took just five minutes to hit the lead again 2-1 when a deep cross from David Barrett found midfielder Peter Bennett who looped a header past Strikers keeper Clint Bolton.

Apart from Laybutt's goal the Strikers only

bright spot in the first half was new signing Stuart McLaren.

McLaren, a former Queensland junior who played two seasons for the Wollongong Wolves before a similar stint with Stirling Albion in Scotland, made a huge impact in his debut. He worked tirelessly for the entire 90 minutes and found the equaliser for the home side on the stroke of half-time.

McLaren, with his back to the goal on the edge of the area showed a touch of class as he brilliantly deceived two defenders and cleverly chipped over the head of Sydney United keeper Andrew Crews.

The second half was a torrid affair played at a hectic pace but Sydney were unable to take advantage of their extra man.

Carlton sweep Breakers aside

By Alan Clark

A rampant Carlton maintained its sweeping run of home victories after recording its fifth from its six home games so far this year.

On paper, the match against Newcastle Breakers - last week's winners over runaway Ericsson Cup leaders Perth Glory - seemed as if it might pose Carlton some difficulty.

Optus Oval's surface, however, is grass, and despite an even first half, Carlton went in one goal up after a 44th minute Alex Moreira goal, then stormed home in the second to record a comprehensive 3 - 0 win.

Newcastle and Carlton had each probed for weaknesses in the other's formation and seemed equally as unsuccessful in the quest.

But with the half almost over, Moreira - scorer of a hat-trick in

Carlton's previous home game - showed his deadliness in front of goal when he headed in from close-range.

The bulk of the credit belongs to Marco Bresciano who had started the move mid-way inside his own half with a direct and powerful run down the middle, riding challenges along the way.

It looked as if he had attempted to evade one challenge too many, but retained the ball, then found Con Anthopoulos making a sup-

who was to prove a handy provider of Newcastle's best moments with his speedy runs down Newcastle's left wing, had again eluded and out-spied his markers.

His pass inside was to where Sang-Chul Yoon lay in wait.

Yoon attempted to finesse three Carlton defenders closing him down when an early shot was the better option, and when it was finally unleashed, passed harmlessly wide.

"We were playing

wants to touch it three times in front of goal six yards out. That's just crap."

On the occasions I've seen Carlton play this year, they get better as the game goes on, and this match was to prove no exception.

Nine minutes after the re-start, Carlton were two up.

This time it was Bresciano with a left-foot finish from near the 18 yard line after Joe Tricarico had carried the ball up the right wing.

With no options for-



Blues captain Andrew Marth: a fine game

Andrew Marth had found himself in space throughout the game, and his combinations with Tricarico, Lubo Lapsansky, and Bresciano snuffed out any Newcastle contemplation of getting back into the contest.

Carlton was able to move the ball, maintaining possession, and

so frustrate the Breakers' attempts to put some together some moves of their own.

Moreira confirmed there was to be no joy for Newcastle with his second - Carlton's third - in the 65th minute.

A smartly cleared ball was played forward by Lapsansky to

where Moreira was able to outrun his marker to fire a neat shot low to Catlin's right.

Late in the game, Buonavoglia then substitute Brad Wiecezorek hit the frame of the Carlton goal with Adrian Cagalj beaten, but they were to depart the ground with not even a consolation score.

Carlton coach Eddie Krncevic was happy with a good team performance: "It was pretty hard to chose man-of-the-match," he said.

"You could go through the whole team.

"I'm very happy with three points, it takes us up to fourth.

"Next week is a hard game against Marconi, but if we can take three points, the way that things are panning out with other teams playing each other, we can end up second very, very quickly."

CARLTON 3 (Moriera 44, 65, Bresciano 54)
NEWCASTLE BREAKERS 0
Venue: Optus Oval
Man of the Match: Marco Bresciano CARL

porting run wide down the right.

Anthopoulos' cross was perfectly flighted for Moreira.

Newcastle should have taken the lead just eight minutes before.

John Buonavoglia,

some good football," said Breakers' coach Lee Sterrey after the game, "(At half-time) we should have led 1-0 from Yoon. We put him in front of the goalkeeper, I told him 'Shoot at him' - he

ward and inside, Tricarico slipped it back to Bresciano whose placed shot went wide of Bob Catlin and inside the far post.

Carlton's most fluid play came from this point in the match.

Rampant Wolves slam in six

Wollongong Wolves striker Sasho Petrovski blasted a brilliant hat-trick as his side demolished a 10-man Gippsland Falcons 6-1 in a national soccer league Round 10 match at Brandon Park on Sunday night.

The 23-year-old striker, in the side for Kosta Salapasis, scored his goals in the 23rd, 49th and 67th minutes.

He was one of the stand-outs in a Wolves team which showed more spirit and character than it had done in past matches, although the game was already well wrapped up by the time the brilliant Alvin Ceccoli

WOLLONGONG 6 (Petrovski 23, 49, 67, Younis 48, own goal 13)
GIPPSLAND FALCONS 1 (Osman pen 14)
Venue: Brandon Park
Man of the Match: Alvin Ceccoli WOLL

went off injured..

Gippsland matched the home side in the first half but floundered after the very dodgy dismissal of Will Hastie in the 60th minute, following a foul on Petrovski.

It was Hastie's first caution and TV pundits afterwards confirmed the opinion that the sending off was harsh.

But by that stage the Wolves had taken a healthy 4-1 lead.

"We played well and hopefully from here on we can continue to score goals as easily as we did tonight," Petrovski said.

It was also a convincing win for the Wolves considering they were without influential captain Matt Horsley, who withdrew due to illness just before kick-off.

The match started brightly with three goals in the opening 23 minutes, the first after

Gippsland defender Jeff Hopkins turned the ball into his own net on 13 minutes.

But the visitors drew back within the minute after Wolves defender Ray Younis brought down Andy Vargas for a penalty.

Gippsland midfielder Levent Osman made no mistake with the spot kick, sending goal keeper Les Pogliacomini the wrong way.

It didn't take long, though, for Petrovski to make his mark.

He ran onto a through ball from midfielder Paul Reid in the 23rd minute and neatly picked his spot to make it 2-1 to the home side.

Like the first, the second half started brightly with Wollongong scoring two goals in the space of a minute.

The first came from an Anthony Surjan corner, in which Younis tucked the ball past goal keeper Bojo Jevdjovic just three minutes in.

Then Petrovski blasted the ball home for his second in the 49th minute.

Wollongong coach Nick Theodorakopoulos said he was happy to secure the three points but a much improved performance would be needed in coming weeks to stay in the hunt for a finals

spot. "We actually said at training during the week that if they (Gippsland) scored a goal we would go out and score six...that's the attitude we took into the game," he said.

"Still, I wasn't overly happy with the performance but it was a win, and it was a game we were expected to win.

"We've still got a lot of work to do, especially in the defensive midfield area but at least the win kept our unbeaten home record intact."

Falcons coach Stuart Munro was unhappy at the lack of determina-

tion shown by his side.

After a 20 minute after match talk he emerged from the visiting dressing room ashen faced.

"They just didn't have heart tonight," he said. "I can ask them to play with determination but can't do it for them.

"Maybe I'll have to pull the boots back on again because there is no way that I would have let some of those attacks past me.

"We just didn't compete."

New boy Lachlan Armstrong came on at half time and put some spark into the Falcons attack but it was too little too late.

Bad boy Smith lets Glory back in four goal thriller

A last gasp strike by Con Boutsianis gave Perth Glory its second successful comeback as the national soccer league leader drew 2-2 with challenger Marconi in Perth on Sunday.

The 90th minute goal enabled Perth to maintain its charge at the top of the table from Marconi who were three points behind and still in touch.

Con Boutsianis, the hero in South Melbourne's grand final win last season, again donned his superman cape to help Perth keep intact its unbeaten home record.

Boutsianis curled a left-foot free kick from just outside the box in the 90th minute to deprive Marconi, much to the delight of the 17,588 supporters.

In the 40th minute, Marconi captain Brad Maloney trapped a beautifully weighted Mike Smith pass to open the score but Marconi drew level in the 55th minute when skipper Gareth Naven's 30 metre strike slipped through the fingers of Marconi's

PERTH GLORY 2 (G Naven 56, Boutsianis 90)

MARCONI 2 (Maloney 38, Trajanovski 60)

Venue: Perth Oval

Man of the Match: Danny Milosevic PRTH



David Aceski.

Perth's joy was short-lived, however, when the sturdy Kris Trajanovski chipped over the top of Milosevic, who was forced to commit himself in a one-on-one situation.

From there, it was all the Glory although a Danny Hay header in the 86th minute was controversially disallowed by referee Eugene Brazzale.

A minute later, a crude Mike Smith

challenge on Paul Strudwick led to his dismissal and a significant delay in the game.

Upon resumption, Boutsianis weaved his magic to give Perth a crucial point.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

WITH Richard Kreider

PERTH GLORY

DANNY MILOSEVIC: Was as dominant as ever and made a number of superb stops throughout the match. His amazing reflex save that denied Francis Awaritefe's cheeky back-heeler in the 85th minute enabled his team to earn what may prove to be a vital draw come finals time next year. 8/10

JAMIE HARNWELL: Tended to drift from the action for long periods, although he did make a couple of important interceptions. Has still to find his feet at this level. 6/10

GAVIN WILKINSON: Had a personal duel with Marconi dangerman Francis Awaritefe, and came through the more dominant. Worked solidly alongside his New Zealand team-mate Danny Hay. 8/10

GARETH NAVEN: A true inspiration as skipper in midfield alongside Con Boutsianis, performed solidly and scored a vital goal in the second half. Collected a second yellow card in as many weeks after a clumsy foul on his opposing captain Brad Maloney. 8/10

CON BOUTSIANIS: Played impressively in his first full game for Glory, his deft touches and goal strikes out of midfield were a constant threat. His equalising goal three minutes from time was world class. 8/10

SCOTT MILLER: Grafted hard throughout, including a couple of quality chances on goal in each half that required equally quality saves. His best was a 13th minute goalbound header that was superbly saved by David Aceski. Faded after the break. 7/10

BOBBY DESPOTOVSKI: Worked behind the main strike force of Markovski and Kalogeracos and performed well. Was the victim of a crude tackle in the 73rd minute that went unpunished by the referee. 7/10

JOHN MARKOVSKI: Desperately unlucky not to score his 100th NSL goal after coming close a few times, especially in the opening half. A fierce 25 metre strike in the 30th minute

with his renowned left foot came close to snapping the cross bar. 8/10

VAS KALOGERACOS: Not as dangerous as he would have liked to have been, had a couple of strikes on the Marconi goal that required good saves by Aceski; a 43rd minute effort in particular was smartly palmed away. 7/10

DANNY HAY: A tower of strength in the back-line alongside his Kiwi team-mate Gavin Wilkinson and Jamie Harnwell. Was unlucky not to have scored in the 86th minute with a strong header that referee Eugene Brazzale ruled null and void after he was judged to have impeded the goalkeeper. 8/10

TONY CARBONE: Looked out of touch in his first game for the club after his return from trialing with Rochdale and Luton own in England. Will take a while to do Robert Trajkovski's right wing-back job as effectively. 6/10

Substitutes Michael Garcia added pace and penetration; John Carbone didn't have much time on the ball, but managed a couple of left sided charges. Paul Strudwick only played 9 minutes, but a free-kick conceded against him enabled Boutsianis to snatch the equaliser.

Total: 81

MARCONI FAIRFIELD

DAVID ACESKI: Marconi coach Frank Farina would have been quietly pleased with the understudy to the injured Ante Covic. Made a number of fine saves throughout the match and should not be blamed for Glory's two goals. 8/10

CHAD GIBSON: A no-nonsense hard worker who was also a menace with his centres off the right flank, especially in the first half. Was one of Marconi's best players because of his defence work and telling distribution. 8/10

MARK BABIC: Was a steadying influence all through the

match from the back-line. Gave the Glory offence very few chances to penetrate. 8/10

MARCUS PHILLIPS: A hard working architect of many forward moves. Is a well organised and valuable motivator for the Stallions. Collected a yellow card in the 80th minute for a foul on Boutsianis. 8/10

DOMINIC LONGO: Built up a number of moves from the back and was telling in his tackling of the opposition. Linked up well with Mark Babic and Chad Gibson. 7/10

DARREN McDONALD: A bustling and enthusiastic midfielder but lacked the urge to push further forward on a number of occasions. 7/10

BRAD MALONEY: et another grand performance from the captain who relished his role in midfield on top of scoring a typical opportunist goal in the 38th minute. Was equally inspirational with his distribution to the strikeforce and was always available to create further options. 8/10

MIKE SMITH: Busy in the backline and deliverer of a number of good crosses. Copped a red card three minutes before the end for a second yellow card offence, a clumsy tackle on Glory substitute Paul Strudwick which led to the second goal to the home team. 7/10

FRANCIS AWARITEFE: Kept subdued for long periods by Glory defender Gavin Wilkinson. His duel with the New Zealander was one of the features of the game. 7/10

KRIS TRAJANOVSKI: Quiet in the first half but came alive after the break to score a goal on the hour which put his side in front for the second time. Was always a threat. 8/10

VLADO ZORIC: Worked tirelessly on the left flank and wasn't afraid to move forward. Was replaced by Chris Care in the 65th minute after fading after the break. 7/10

Substitute Chris Care was always a threat while Buddy Farrah had only three minutes of action time which he was unable to use effectively.

Total: 83

SCOREBOARD

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AUSTRALIA

Ericsson Cup Round 10

Saturday 12 December

Brisbane Strikers 2 Sydney United 2

Venue: Suncorp Stadium

Referee: M Breeze

Attendance: 4,305

Brisbane: Bolton, Gwynne, Zorocich, Laybutt, Harper (North 26), S Cranney (Knipe 70), Wehrman, McLaren, Srhoj, Harris, Meredith

Scorers: Laybutt 30, McLaen 48

Yellow Cards: Wehrman, McLaren, Meredith

Red Card: Harris

United: Crews, Barrett, Kupresak, Plesa, Vrkic, Bennett (Caleta 71), Berry, Ardone, Burns (Santalab 76), Sterjovski, Griffiths (Townsend 65)

Scorers: Ardone 5, Bennett 35

Yellow Card: Bennett

Sunday 13 December

Carlton 3 Newcastle Breakers 0

Venue: Optus Oval

Referee: W Dade

Attendance: 3,882

Carlton: Cagalj, Anthopoulos, Douglas, D Cervinski (Della Rocca 75), Stergiopoulos, Bresciano, Marth, Lapsansky, Markovac (Vlahos 60), Moreira (Josifovski 78), Tricarico.

Scorers: Moreira (44, 65), Bresciano (54).

Yellow Cards: Lapsansky, Bresciano.

Newcastle Breakers: Catlin, Shannon,

Pryce, McManus, Roberts, Sprod

(Wieczorek 61), Ritchie, Mark Wilson (Maguire 61), Umlil, Buonavoglia, Yoon (Sanderson 73).

Yellow Cards: Pryce, McManus.

Perth Glory 2 Marconi Fairfield 2

Venue: Perth Oval

Referee: E Brazzale

Attendance: 17,588

Perth: Milosevic, Tony Carbone (Strudwick 81), Miller (Garcia 65), Hay, Wilkinson, Harnwell, G Naven, Boutsianis, J Markovski, Kalogeracos, Despotovski (John Carbone 73)

Scorers: G Naven 56, Boutsianis 87

Yellow Cards: G Naven, Despotovski Marconi: Aceski, Gibson, M Babic, Phillips, Longo, McDonald, Maloney, Smith, Awaritefe (Farrah 87), Trajanovski, Zoric (Care 65)

Scorers: Maloney 38, Trajanovski 60

Yellow Cards: M Babic, Phillips, Smith, Awaritefe

Red Card: Smith

Melbourne Knights 0 Adelaide Sharks 1

Venue: Knights Park

Referee: E Lennie

Attendance: 3,204

Knights: Didulica, Kovacevic, Banini, Vukadin, Sevin (Nastevski 70), Reda, Pondeljak, Susa, Kelic, Hrvoje (Kutlesovski 70), Jloic

Yellow Card: Reda

Sharks: Wildy, Alagich, Castro, Kuzmanovic, P Souris, Kokkinoplitis, Milosevic, Thorp, Poimer, Duric (Porter 72), Gibson.

Scorer: Thorp 33

Yellow Cards: Castro, Milosevic

Wollongong Wolves 6

Gippsland Falcons 1

Venue: Brandon Park

Referee: J Tippet

Attendance: 3,356

Wolves: Pogliacomi, G Souris, Ceccoli

(Huxley 66), Sinozic, Surjan (Brooks 75),

Chipperfield, Younis, Petrovski, Langan,

Masi, Reid (Spencer 55)

Scorers: Younis 49, Petrovski 22, 51, 64,

Spencer 71, own goal 11)

Yellow Cards: Chipperfield, Younis

Falcons: Jevdjovic, Anderson (Byrne 65), Go-

tis, Hopkins, Osman, MacNicol (Hutchinson 45), Thompson,

Perinovic, Vargas, Hastie, Puca

(Armstrong 45)

Scorer: Osman penalty 13

Yellow Cards: Anderson, Hopkins, Thompson, Vargas

Red Card: Hastie

Adelaide City 1 South Melbourne 1

Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium

Referee: C Diomis

Attendance: 3,491

City: Petkovic, Ivanovic, Tobin, Talladira, Mori, Veart, Mennillo (Sabljak

ERICSSON CUP 1998/99

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1 Perth Glory	10	7	2	1	24	11	23
2 Marconi Fairfield	9	6	2	1	21	11	20
3 South Melbourne	10	5	3	2	21	16	18
4 Carlton	10	5	2	3	24	11	17
5 Adelaide City	9	5	2	2	13	9	17
6 Sydney United	10	5	2	3	16	14	17
7 Adelaide Sharks	9	4	2	3	14	12	14
8 Sydney Olympic	9	4	1	4	15	15	13
9 Wollongong City	9	3	2	4	16	16	11
10 Brisbane Strikers	9	2	4	3	13	14	10
11 Northern Spirit	8	3	1	4	6	10	10
12 Melbourne Knights	9	3	0	6	8	12	9
13 Gippsland Falcons	9	2	2	5	5	16	8
14 Newcastle Breakers	9	2	1	6	10	18	7
15 Canberra Cosmos	9	0	0	9	6	28	0

79), Costanzo, Teminello, Kim

Scorer: Mori 33

South: Petkovic, Iosifidis, de Amicis, Orlic, Clarkson (Polak 35), Panopoulos (Tsekini 79), Coveny, Trimboli, Curcija (Anastasiadis 61), Baser, Lozanovski

Scorer: own goal 38

Yellow Card: Lozanovski

Red Card: Lozanovski

ENGLAND

Premier League

Saturday 12 December

Blackburn Rovers 0

Derby County 2

Everton 1

Leicester City 3

Middlesbrough 1

Sheffield Wednesday 3

Tottenham Hotspur 2

Newcastle United 0

Chelsea 2

Southampton 0

Nottingham Forest 1

West Ham United 0

Charlton Athletic 0

Manchester United 2

P W D L F A Pts

Man Utd 16 8 6 2 33 19 30

Aston V 16 8 6 2 24 15 30

Chelsea 16 7 8 1 26 16 29

Middlesbrough 16 6 9 2 27 19 27

Leeds Utd 16 6 8 2 26 14 26

Arsenal 16 6 8 2 15 7 26

West Ham 17 7 5 5 20 21 26

Leicester 17 6 6 5 21 19 24

Derby Cnty 17 5 8 4 17 16 23

Tottenham 17 6 5 6 23 26 23

Wimbledon 16 6 5 5 21 26 23

Liverpool 16 6 4 6 27 21 22

Sheff Wed 17 6 4 7 20 17 22

Everton 17 5 7 5 11 15 22

Newcastle 17 5 6 6 21 21 21

Charlton A 17 3 7 7 22 27 16

Coventry City 16 4 3 9 14 23 15

Blackburn 17 3 4 10 15 24 13

Nott Frst 17 2 5 10 15 30 11

Southampton 17 2 4 11 12 34 10

Division 1

Wednesday 9 December

Crewe 1

Crystal Palace 1

Friday 11 December

Bury 3

Saturday 12 December

Bristol City 1

Huddersfield 0

Ipswich 0

West Brom 1

Tranmere 1

Sheffield United 3

Crystal Palace 1

West Bromwich 3

Barnsley 2

Oxford 1

Queens Park Rangers 0

Sunderland 2

Swindon 1

Tranmere 1

Watford 4

Wolverhampton 2

Sunderland

Ipswich

Watford

Birmingham

Bradford

Norwich

Bolton

Huddersfield

West Brom

Sheff Utd

Wolves

Grimsby

Barnsley

Crystal P

Bury

Stockport

QPR

Portsmouth

Swindon

Tranmere

Oxford

Port Vale

Brist City

Crewe

Division 2

Wednesday 9 December

York 2

Saturday 12 December

Blackpool 0

Bournemouth 2

Fulham 4

Lincoln 0

Macclesfield 2

Manchester City 0

Millwall 1

Northampton 1

Birmingham 7

Crewe 1

Port Vale 0

Bradford 4

Bolton 1

Stockport 2

Norwich 2

P W L D F A Pts

22 14 7 1 51 15 49

23 12 6 5 31 14 42

23 11 7 5 41 33 40

23 11 5 7 37 24 38

22 11 4 7 40 26 37

22 10 7 5 37 29 37

22 9 9 4 41 31 36

23 10 5 8 33 39 35

23 10 4 9 43 38 34

23 9 7 7 36 38 34

23 9 7 7 33 24 34

22 9 5 8 27 26 32

23 7 9 7 34 30 30

21 8 5 8 32 36 29

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23 5 11 7 28 31 26

23 7 4 12 25 33 25

22 6 6 10 31 35 24

23 6 6 11 31 39 24

23 4 12 7 29 35 24

23 6 5 12 26 43 23

23 6 4 13 26 45 22

23 4 8 11 33 50 20

23 3 6 14 23 47 15

Lincoln City 1

Wycombe 0

York 1

Burnley 0

Colchester 0

Luton 2

Bristol Rovers 0

Reading 1

Chesterfield 0

Notts County 2

Oldham 0

Stoke 0

Wigan 1

P W L D F A Pts

21 14 2 5 30 15 44

20 13 3 4 32 16 42

21 13 3 5 32 24 42

20 10 7 3 37 21 37

21 8 10 3 29 18 34

20 9 5 6 21 14 32

19 8 6 5 31 21 30

19 8 6 5 26 21 30

21 7 9 5 24 19 30

20 8 6 6 24 26 30

21 8 5 8 27 21 29

21 7 8 6 20 22 29

21 7 7 7 25 25 28

21 6 7 8 21 28 25

20 6 7 7 19 23 25

21 6 6 9 26 36 24

21 5 9 7 24 25 24

21 6 5 10 22 34 23

20 5 6 9 23 28 21

21 4 9 8 19 23 21

21 4 8 9 19 28 20

21 4 5 12 19 34 17

21 3 7 11 16 26 16

21 3 4 14 20 38 13

Shrewsbury 0

Rotherham 1

Plymouth 0

Hartlepool 1

Darlington 0

Brentford 1

Peterborough 2

Cardiff 2

Barnet 3

Rochdale 1

Hull 0

P W L D F A Pts

21 12 4 5 25 16 40

21 11 4 6 32 23 37

19 12 0 7 35 26 36

SCOREBOARD

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

NORTHMEAD SIGNS

Wimbledon v Darlington or Manchester City
Newcastle United v Crystal Palace
Bradford v Grimsby
Bristol City v Everton
Crewe v Oxford
Bolton v Wolverhampton
Preston v Arsenal
Coventry City v Macclesfield
Rochdale or Rotherham v Exeter or Bristol Rovers
West Ham United v Swansea
Wrexham v Scunthorpe
Aston Villa v Hull
Bury v Stockport
Lincoln v Sunderland
Cardiff v Yeovil
Ties to be played on January 2 or 3

Auto Windscreens Shield
Northern Section - First Round
Blackpool 0 Stoke 2
Burnley 0 Preston 1
Chester 1 Hartlepool 2
Hartlepool win on Golden Goal rule
Macclesfield 0 Wrexham 1
Man City 1 Mansfield 2
Notts County P Hull P
Oldham 0 Darlington 1
Rotherham 0 Wigan 3
Southern Section - First Round
Bournemouth 2 Reading 0
Brentford 2 Plymouth 0
Peterborough 3 Leyton Orient 0
Shrewsbury 0 Wycombe 1
Swansea 4 Barnet 1
Walsall 2 Bristol Rovers 2
Walsall won 5-4 on penalties

FRANCE

Friday 11 December
Rennes 3 Montpellier 2
Strasbourg 2 Nantes 2

GERMANY

Bundesliga
Friday 11 December
Hamburg SV 0 Hertha Berlin 4
Borussia Dortmund 1 Borussia Mgladbach 1
Saturday 12 December
Kaiserslautern 2 Eintracht Frankfurt 1

NORTHERN IRELAND

Premier Division
Saturday 12 December
Coleraine 0 Crusaders 2
Glenavon 0 Cliftonville 0
Linfield 4 Ballymena United 1
Newry 1 Portadown 2
Omagh Town 1 Glentoran 4

ROMANIA

Romanian Cup (quarter-final second leg)
Wednesday 9 December
Petrolul Ploiesti (I) 1 Steaua Bucharest (I) 1
(Steaua Bucharest won 6-2 on aggregate)
Rapid Bucharest (I) 2 Gloria Bistrita (I) 1
(Rapid won 3-2 on aggregate)
Otelul Galati (I) 1 FCM Bacau (I) 0
(FCM Bacau won 2-1 on aggregate)
Dinamo Bucharest (I) 2 UM Timisoara (III) 0
(Dinamo won 3-1 on aggregate)

The Romanian Cup semifinals are to be played in the spring of the next year.

SCOTLAND

Premier League
Saturday 12 December
Aberdeen 2 Hearts 0
Dundee United 1 Celtic 1

Dunfermline Athletic 1 Motherwell 1
Rangers 1 Kilmarnock 0
St Johnstone 1 Dundee 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rangers	16	9	4	3	30	14	31
Kilmarnock	17	8	7	2	25	10	31
Celtic	17	7	5	5	33	19	26
St Johnst	17	6	7	4	20	23	25
Hearts	17	6	5	6	19	21	23
Dundee	15	5	4	6	14	20	19
Dundee Utd	17	4	6	7	17	19	18
Motherwell	16	4	6	6	13	22	18
Dunfermline	17	2	9	6	14	24	15
Aberdeen	17	3	5	9	15	28	14

Division 1
Wednesday 9 December
Raith 1 Hamilton 1
Saturday 12 December
Ayr 0 Raith 2
Clydebank 2 Stranraer 1
Hamilton 0 Greenock Morton 0
Hibernian 2 Falkirk 1
St Mirren 1 Airdrieonians 5

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hibernian	19	12	5	2	38	22	41
Falkirk	19	10	5	4	30	18	35
Ayr	19	10	3	6	36	25	33
Airdrie	19	10	3	6	25	20	33
St Mirren	19	8	4	7	17	22	28
Clydebank	19	6	7	6	19	21	25
Hamilton	19	5	7	7	25	27	22
Raith	19	4	7	8	18	25	19
Greenock	19	4	4	11	17	24	16
Stranraer	19	3	1	15	17	38	10

Division 2
Saturday 12 December
East Fife 0 Clyde 0
Forfar 1 Livingston 2
Inverness C. Thistle v Alloa postponed
Queen of the South 0 Partick 0
Stirling 0 Arbroath 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Livingston	18	13	4	1	36	19	43
Inverness	17	10	5	2	35	24	35
Clyde	18	8	6	4	26	18	30
Stirling	18	9	1	8	29	31	28
Alloa	17	7	3	7	37	25	24
Partick	17	7	2	9	18	21	23
Arbroath	18	6	4	8	17	23	22
East Fife	18	5	4	9	22	35	19
Queen of the South	18	3	5	10	17	25	14
Forfar	18	2	4	12	18	34	10

Division 3
Saturday 12 December
Albion 0 Dumbarton 2
East Stirling 2 Ross County 2
Montrose 1 Cowdenbeath 1
Queen's Park 1 Berwick 1
Stenhousemuir v Brechin postponed

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ross County	18	13	1	4	46	20	40
Brechin	17	9	6	2	22	13	33
Stenhouse	17	9	3	5	26	17	30
Dumbarton	18	8	4	6	24	17	28
Berwick	18	5	8	5	22	22	23
Albion	18	7	2	9	22	35	23
Queen's Park	18	5	6	7	23	23	21
E Stirling	18	3	8	7	20	22	17
Cowdenbeath	18	4	3	11	17	33	15
Montrose	18	3	5	10	18	38	14

FA Cup first round replay
Wednesday 9 December
Livingston 3 Dumbarton 0
Saturday 12 December
Alloa 0 Stenhousemuir 2

WALES

League of Wales
Saturday 12 December
Afan Lido 2 Rhyl 1
Bangor City 2 Cwmbran Town 2
Caernarfon 4 Haverfordwest 4

Cardiff 2
Caernarfon Town 0
Connah's Quay 0

UEFA

Wednesday 9 December
UEFA Cup
Third Round 2nd Leg
Liverpool 0 Celta Vigo 1
Celta Vigo won 4-1 on aggregate
Parma 3 Rangers 1
Parma won 4-2 on aggregate

European Champion Clubs Cup
Wednesday December 9
Group A
Croatia Zagreb 1 Olympiakos 1
Porto 3 Ajax 0

Group B
Athletic Bilbao 1 Galatasaray 0
Juventus 2 Rosenborg 0

Group C
Real Madrid 2 S partak Moscow 1
Sturm Graz 0 Inter Milan 2

Group D
Brondby 0 Barcelona 2
Man United 1 Bayern Munich 1

Group E
Lens 1 Dynamo Kiev 3
Panathinaikos 1 Arsenal 3

Group F
Kaiserslautern 5 Helsinki 2
Eindhoven 2 Benfica 2

SPANISH

SPAIN
Barcelona crashed to a humiliating 3-1 defeat to Villarreal at Nou Camp stadium -- its fourth successive loss in the Spanish first division. Two stunning first-half strikes from Romanian international Gica Craioveanu set the visitors on their way to victory and they went further clear midway through the second as Gerardo Garcia slotted past Ruud Hesp from inside the area.

Brazilian striker Giovanni pulled one back for Barcelona with eight minutes to go but despite a flurry of late chances for the home side Villarreal held on to complete a famous win.

The result leaves the Catalan giant down in 10th place in the table -- nine points behind leader Mallorca, who maintained its stranglehold on the first division with a 1-0 win at Real Zaragoza.

With Celta Vigo, Valencia and Real Madrid also recording victories, Barcelona's title hopes already look slim.

After 14 games, Mallorca lead on 28 points, three clear of second-placed Celta Vigo, who beat Espanyol 2-0.

Valencia moved third behind Celta on goal difference with a 1-0 home win over Salamanca.

Deportivo Coruna slipped to fourth as it was beaten 2-1 at Athletic Bilbao.

Real Madrid's win, which saw a resilient Sociedad side come from behind twice before falling to a Clarence Seedorf strike five minutes from time, was its first in five league games and lifted it to sixth, six points behind the leader but with a game in hand.

GERMAN

Bayern Munich recaptured the lead in the German first division by taming Bayer Leverkusen 2-0 in a top-of-the-table clash.

Midfielder Michael Tarnat put Bayern ahead from inside the penalty area after 20 minutes and Brazilian striker Elber scored the home side's other goal 10 minutes later, also from close range.

The visitors were reduced to 10 men when Croa-

tian defender Robert Kovac was sent off for bringing down Elber just outside the box in the 76th minute.

Bayern, who trailed Leverkusen on goal difference, is now three points clear of its rival with a game in hand halfway through the championship.

Leverkusen, which has not beaten Bayern in Munich since 1989, had gone 13 league matches without defeat before Sunday's game. The last time it lost an away match was when it fell 2-1 to Bayern in its previous trip to the Bavarian capital last April.

ENGLAND

Dion Dublin got the winner in the 83rd minute as Aston Villa rallied with three second-half goals to beat Arsenal 3-2 at Villa Park and regain first place in England's premier league.

Meanwhile, Wimbledon defeated slumping Liverpool 1-0 on Robbie Earle's 48th minute goal. Villa has 33 points followed by Manchester United (30), Chelsea (29), Middlesbrough (27), Leeds (26), Arsenal (26), West Ham (26), Wimbledon (26) and Leicester (24).

Arsenal, the defending league and FA Cup champions, pulled ahead 2-0 on two first-half strikes by Dutch striker Dennis Bergkamp, who returned to the lineup after missing four games and pushed his season goal total to four.

But Villa rallied with a strike in the 62nd minute by Julian Joachim and then two by Dublin in the 65th and 83rd. Dublin, who got the winner on a 12-metre shot off a corner, has made Villa a title contender since moving earlier in the season from Coventry.

Villa, which dropped out of first place on Saturday for the first time all season, moved back on top with 33 points to 30 for Manchester United.

In Sunday's other match, Wimbledon kept up Liverpool's misery with a 1-0 victory on a 48th-minute goal by Robbie Earle. Wimbledon, the low budget team that defies critics, has reached the semifinals of League

Cup and, with this win, moved into eighth place on 26 points.

Liverpool, which played well and deserved a least a tie, was doomed when Michael Owen missed a late penalty to tie on the eve of his 19th birthday.

Liverpool stayed on 22 points in 12th place. The Reds have lost seven of their last 11 games and were ousted last week from the European UEFA Cup.

ITALY

Brazilian Ronaldo scored an 89th minute winner to give Inter Milan a 1-0 win at Udinese in the Italian first division soccer competition today.

Inter's victory rekindled their flagging title challenge and took them to within four points of leaders Fiorentina, which was due to host champions Juventus.

George Weah also hit a late winner to give 10-man AC Milan a 1-0 win over Vicenza, which moved the five times European champions into second place in Serie A.

AS Roma and Parma are tied on 23 points following their 1-1 draw at Parma's Tardini stadium. Argentine Hernan Crespo gave the home side a first half lead before midfielder Carmine Gautieri pulled Roma level after the break.

Yugoslav defender Sinisa Mihajlovic scored a hat-trick of free-kicks in Lazio's 5-2 drubbing of struggling Sampdoria.

UEFA DRAW

The quarter-final draws for the European Cup, the UEFA Cup and the Cup Winners' Cup will all be made in Geneva on Wednesday, UEFA confirmed. The only draw to involve any seeding will be the European Cup, where Real Madrid and Manchester United -- the two teams who qualified as the best runners-up in the group phase -- will be kept apart.

Both teams will also play their first leg ties at home and will not be drawn against the winners of their respective groups, Inter Milan and Bayern Munich.

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